

TIGHT BINDING BOOK

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OU_166560

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

THE
ARABS IN SPAIN;

HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

“ Whilome on those banks did legions throng
“ *Of Moor and Knight*, in mailed splendour drest :
“ Here ceased the swift their race, here sunk the strong ;
“ The Paynim turban and the Christian crest
“ Mixed on the bleeding stream.”

IN TWO VOLUMES,

VOL. II.

LONDON :
E. CHURTON, 26, HOLLES STREET.

1843.

London—Schulze & Co. 13, Poland Street

THE
ARABS IN SPAIN.

CHAPTER I.

The command given to Ocba—His death—Rebellion of the Berbers—Abdelmalec reinstated—He is murdered—El Buktar's division of the country—Rebellion of Samail Ben Hutem—Convocation of the Nobles—Jussuff Ben Fehr elected ruler—Renewal of civil war.

THE victory of Charles Martel inflicted a heavier blow on his enemies, than the mere dispersion and retreat of their army. It impressed on the minds of this ardent

and up to this moment, all conquering people, a feeling of disappointment, rage, and even astonishment, which, added to the principles of fatalism, inculcated by their prophet, produced a general despondency, that neither the fervent eloquence of their new Emir, Abdelmalec Ben Kotam, nor the memory of their long career of uninterrupted conquest, were able to dissipate. Languidly they listened to his exhortations to rally their spirits, and resume their arms. The French troops surprised the retreating Moslems amidst the defiles of the Pyrenees, and again defeated their last hope ; and the disappointed and alarmed Caliph issued the order for divesting Abdelmalec of the command, and placed Ocba, the conqueror of Mauritania, in his

stead. The celebrity of this warrior* was owing to his signal integrity, and to a happy combination of qualities which rendered him as able a statesman, as he was a skilful commander. His assumption of the reins of government was instantaneously felt among all the Cadis and unjust lieutenants of provinces, who were replaced by magistrates of sounder principles, and of more benevolent intentions. The administration of the Walis was carefully examined into, and their rapacity effectually checked; the Emir then gave his attention to the project of a new invasion of the Gallic territories, conformably to the instructions of his sovereign; but at this time a fresh revolt

* Hist. de la Domin. des Arabes en Espagne, Car-donne, tom. 1.

of the Berber tribes claimed his more immediate attention, and his return to Africa. In that district, victory crowned all his efforts, and justice accompanied his progress, but when he returned to Spain, he found that country in the opening ferment of civil dissension, and he was also aware that his end was rapidly approaching. He retired to Cordova, where, on his death bed, he recommended his virtuous predecessor to the Caliph, and expired amidst the sincere regrets of a people, whom he had endeavoured to benefit by redressing their complaints, and by consolidating the forces of the kingdom for their protection. The death of Ocba appeared the signal for a general revolt; the Berbers had waited but his departure, again to unfurl the standard of rebellion. The

Emir of Africa was defeated, and the power of the Caliph was further insulted in the person of his lieutenant in Egypt.

Everywhere the rebels were victorious, and the Caliph's troops retreated to the African coast, under the command of their officers Ben Bakr, and Thalab, whence they passed over into Spain. The Caliph had confirmed the wish of Ocba, and the Emir Abdelmalec heard, with deep concern, of the arrival of a force, whose presence would of necessity be hailed by the factious, and who would be easily induced to espouse that party whose prospects of success appeared most immediate or flattering. Nor were his fears groundless :* the instructions which he

* Novairi, tom. 1. El Gessn. MSS. Bibl. du roi E.

sent to the African generals not to advance further from the coast, but to hold themselves in readiness to return into the revolted provinces of Africa, were construed by his enemies into a wish of rendering himself independent, and hence, that he dreaded their presence. The result was, the advance of Ben Bakr and Thalab, at the head of an imposing force, with the hope of seizing on Toledo, ere the Emir, who was in Saragossa, could arrive to its assistance. Abdelmalec, on these tidings, lost no time in appearing before its walls, and no sooner did his son, who commanded its garrison, hear of his father's arrival, than he made a desperate sally, and compelled the besiegers to retreat with great loss. The son of the Emir's friend Ocba, repulsed with equal success the

factionous foe from before the walls of Cordova ; but inflamed by victory, he was tempted to a too precipitate pursuit, and the rallying shock of Ben Bakr's cavalry being too impetuous for the young hero to resist, his troops were consequently defeated. On this, the Emir retreated to Cordova, and placed himself in apparent security within its gates. But his confidence was betrayed, and while he wrote to reproach the African generals with their faithless and most unpatriotic conduct, and to offer them peace on the mildest terms, their vanity argued that this proceeding was dictated by timidity, and they refused to listen to his proposals. The appearance of their army before Cordova inspired a real or an imaginary fear ; the cowardice of the Cordovans suggested, what their

baseness performed, and by the delivery of Abdelmalec into the hands of his enemies, they sought and obtained a dishonourable security for themselves. The virtuous Abdelmalec was murdered by the savage Ben Bakr, and civil war was declared in Spain, by his proclaiming himself its Emir. The jealousy of his brother in arms, Thalab was aroused by this conduct ; he declared his adherence to the legitimate sovereign at Damascus, and that in him alone resided the choice of an Emir.

In the plain of Calatrava, the pride of Ben Bakr was doomed to suffer both a check and an extinction. The valiant Abderahmen Ben Ocba met him at the head of his forces, and accepted his challenge of single combat ; he slew the factious tyrant, gained for himself the

proud name of Al Mansor, and pursued the flying enemy with rapidity, perseverance, and success.

Thalab pursued his career with somewhat better success; he entered the gates, and seized the city of Cordova, and was about to indulge his *humane* propensities by the slaughter of one thousand of his prisoners, but they were saved by the timely arrival of the Caliph's Emir—the celebrated Hossein El Buktar, to whom they were presented as sign of homage by Thalab. On the same day, they were set at liberty, while he was arrested and reconducted to Tangiers.

El Buktar's government was marked by measures of mild policy, and a great wish for the reconciliation of all parties in Spain. In the division which he made of the country, he attempted to assimilate

the climate and its products to the aboriginal qualities of those of its destined occupiers.*

His plans met with the highest approval from all classes, and many others of his acts tended to heal the wounds which civil war had inflicted ; nor can we suppose they would have failed, if the spirit of faction had not already taken too deep a root to be banished from the land. El Buktar deemed it necessary to depose Samail Ben Hutem from the Waliha or provincial government which he had degraded by his extortions and

* He gave Beledi and Ossnoba to the Egyptians ; Tadmira or Murcia to the Arabs of Kahtan ; Seville, and its district to the Syrians ; and to the African provincials he gave Medonia and Algeciras &c. &c. Vide. Conde Hist. Arab. tom. 1. Casiri, tom. 2, and Cardonne, tom. 1.

injustice ; and this man, burning with vengeance, rushed into open rebellion, and by his valour and influence, plunged the kingdom into civil discord.

El Buktar was surprised, taken prisoner, and confined in the citadel of Cordova, and the people were ordered to believe that this was by the command of the Caliph at Damascus. At length the sons of Ocba and of Abdelmalec, effected the deliverance of El Buktar, and this hero heading the Cordovans, and others who had joined his standard, in a vigorous charge of the troops of Samail, met his death on the field, and left the kingdom to anarchy and rapine.

The convocation of the leading nobles of the tribes of Yemen, Egypt and Cahtan discussed the propriety, and succeeded with difficulty in assembling a

large body of the people to devise some method which should deliver the country from a state of tyranny, and mis-rule, no longer supportable. Their general opinion expressed the necessity of elevating to the government one ruler; they might have referred the choice to the Caliph, but the affairs of the east were in the greatest confusion, and the communication through the revolted provinces of Mauritania, and Egypt was difficult and uncertain. They elected one Jussuff Ben Fehr, of the Korish tribe, and who claimed a direct descent from the prophet.

All Spain approved the choice of the assembly, and the mild and peaceful character of Jussuff gave every reason to presume the utmost advantages from his government. The death also, of more

than one turbulent chieftain, smoothed away difficulties, and Jussuff, with popular opinion in his favour, was enabled to effect many reforms, and to restore order throughout the Andalousian district.* To the rebellious Samail, and the high admiral,† Amer Ben Amrou, he conceded the governments of Toledo, and Seville, dreading perhaps the turbulence of the former, and the vast riches and ambi-

* Cardonne, tom. 1.

† The admiral's office had, at this time, become a sinecure, owing to the total cessation of intercourse between the east and west. Amer Ben Amrou claimed a high descent, and maintained a princely establishment. His palace was in or near Cordova, and was one of the largest and richest then in existence in Spain, his retinue was immense.—Al Kebr. Bibl. du roi K.

tion of the latter. During the administration of Jussuff, the communications between the different towns and provinces were reopened and perfected, and in the cities of his government he reconstructed the bridges, and increased, and facilitated public convenience and luxury. He repaired the ruin caused by civil war, and set apart for the erection and maintenance of public edifices throughout the kingdom three quarters of the tribute money of each province. He took a census of the population, and divided the country into five* great departments. The conquests, or encroachments of the

* Vide Géogr. de Danville—Bætis &c. Pinkerton's Geography vol. 1. (Spain,) and Cardonne's Hist. tom. 1, p. 381.

Asturian Christians extended to the banks of the Douro, and the able talents of their leader Don Alphonso the Great was daily cementing, and extending their power by the means which Arab dissension and lawlessness so amply afforded.

The Arabian historians give us to understand that the mind of Jussuff was seized with the wild schemes of Gallic invasion, and European conquest; schemes, which he was only prevented from attempting, by a recurrence of civil war, which, fanned and fomented by the jealousy, and ambition of Samail, Amer, and their followers, again raged with renewed fury, and with a violence which threatened to destroy the monarchy, the name, and the religion of the prophet, in the fair regions of the west. The weak

policy of Jussuff proved the means of extending the war from one end of Spain to the other.

Convinced of the treasonable designs of Amer Ben Amrou by intercepted letters, he wanted the courage openly to resent, or the policy prudently to dissemble. By half measures, he excited his suspicions, and hastened his revolt, and by a proceeding whose rigour was only equalled by its baseness, he cancelled the good opinion of the public, and applied the match to that flame, which eventually consumed himself, and thousands of his countrymen.

Concerting with Samail, he planned the seizure and the death of Amer. At his palace of Siguenza, Samail learnt and awaited the approach of the admiral, and sent out to salute and invite him to

partake of his hospitality. The unsuspecting Amer accepted the offer, but no sooner were they at table, than the appearance of Samail's soldiers warned him of the danger in which he stood. The valiant Arab, sword in hand, cut a passage for himself, and having thus saved his life, he raised the banner of war and the cry of revenge, and openly proclaimed the defeated treachery of Samail and Jussuff, while he carefully exaggerated the massacre of Siguenza. The nobles of the tribes of Yemen, and Kahtan, disgusted with the conduct of Samail, espoused his cause. Ben Amrou raised a large force in Toledo, and soon greatly augmenting it, advanced to Saragossa, which he reduced. Jussuff hastened on his side, to levy troops from all the cities and districts; the whole country split

into the factions of Amer, Samail, or Jussuff took up arms. The frontiers were deserted by the coast forces, whose generals had fled to join the rival armies, and enjoy a share of the combat and the plunder.

The towns and fields were the scenes of continued warfare ; pillage, violence, and murder, were everywhere conspicuous. The total suspension of laws or justice, the devastation in the plains, the smoking ruins of the city bespoke the frightful presence of anarchy, and Spain given up to this cruel power, received the desolating marks of faction, which after times could never obliterate, and which the smiles of a rich prosperity, in a later period, only served to render more apparent, and more appalling.

At this epoch also the east was

covered with the armies of rebellious Emirs, alarmed by the quick succession of her revolted provinces, and worn out and divided by the fierce struggle between the houses of Ommiah and of Abbas. The former had owed its existence to that cunning and intriguing Ommawyah, who had established his throne in blood, and his popularity in Syria. The indolence of his successors or their vices, had alike disappointed and disgusted the Arabians, and they were equally fatigued by the likeness of the Walids, or the ferocity of the Yezids, and Suleimans of that race. Though the memory and the death of Othman had raised and confirmed the power of Ommwyah, the murder of Hussein, and the crimes of Yezid were equally unfor-

gotten and now cried out for vengeance. The Caliph Mervan II, was the last and most unfortunate of his race. The influence of the Abassides spread revolt and dissension around his throne, and the ambitious Azfah, openly proclaiming himself Caliph, defeated and pursued the fugitive Mervan from the banks of the Euphrates to the depths of Egypt. There, the descendant of Ommwyah was discovered in his retreat, his life was sacrificed and his remains cruelly mutilated. The house of Abbas everywhere triumphant, raised their black banner on citadel and town, and Azfah was at length acknowledged as the twentieth cousin of the prophet, and the Caliph of the east.

The rites of hospitality have been ever

held sacred among the civilised and the barbarous tribes of earth, and among none, more so than the ancestors and posterity of Mohammed. But revenge and factious ambition are potent ministers to the worst passions of mankind, and while they stifle the voice of conscience, induce the violation of the most affecting duties of life.

It was considered, that while an Om-miade remained alive, the power of Azfah was insecure. Their fallen fortunes, their cruel treatment, might awaken the pity and the indignation of the people. It was determined therefore to proceed to their total extermination.

In the sumptuous halls of Abdallah, the Caliph's uncle, a grand festival was proclaimed, to which, in common with

many others, the race of Ommwyah was invited, and the unsuspecting victims were seduced by the tones of peace and harmony, and by the security which the sacredness of Arabian hospitality gave, to accept the proffered entertainment. Xiabil the bard or minstrel of the Abbassides was shortly introduced into the banquet hall. In his chaunt, he excited his ferocious chieftain to revenge and murder, by recalling the fate of Hussein, and the crimes of the Om-miades. Overcome with fury, the too willing Abdallah gave the signal ; eighty guests were sacrificed to his base vengeance, their warm and bleeding bodies are reported to have served as the table to the remaining partakers of Abdallah's hospitality, and the power of the Abas-sides was cemented by the bloody feast.

of Damascus, and by the subsequent dispersion of all its foes. The tombs of the Ommiadan princes were broken, their bones dispersed, their memories accursed, and the hapless remnant of the race prowled in the deep forest or in the unknown glens of that vast empire which his ancestors had acquired by their valour and ennobled by their deeds and victories.*

* See the whole story of the fall of the Ommiades in the Arabian Historians. MSS. Escorial, translation ; Cardonne and many others, in D'Herbelot *Bibl. Orientale* ; articles, Abbas, Mervan, Abdallah, &c. &c. and Saffah vel Azfah.

The families of Moahwyah and of Mohammed were of the same tribe, but according to the principles of legitimacy, the throne belonged to the descendants of Fatima, and even the children of Abbas, the uncle of the prophet, had a claim prior to that of Moahwyah. —Vide Mill's *Mohammedanism*, C. 2.

From the coasts of India to the borders of the Atlantic ocean, and from the rock of Taric to the defiles of the Pyrenees, Asia and Europe had obeyed their sceptre, received their laws, and had sworn obedience to their crown under the powerful energy and aid of their house ; all Arabia had obeyed the commands of their prophet, and had extended her power and his creed ; under the house of Abbas, the pride of the Caliph,

If the exertions of military talents were always crowned with success, Mervan would have retained the throne. In the life of his father he had been governor of Mesopotamia, where the warlike breed of asses who never fly from the enemy, attach to the word ass the popular idea of the perfection of a man. Mervan was honoured with this singular appellation, and his abilities deserved every epithet of praise. *Ibid* and d'Herbelot, art. Mervan.

the war cry of the Arab, and the standard of the Moslem were destined to wither, to decline, and at last to perish in streams of blood, and in the ruin of dissension, of time, and worldly vicissitude.

CHAPTER II.

Conspiracy of the noble Scheiks—They nominate Abdalrahman sovereign—He lands at Almuneçar—Battle of Musara—Battle of Lorca and death of Jussuff—Samail put to death—Invasion of Spain by Aly Ben Moqueir—He is defeated and slain—End of the War—Spain invaded by Charlemagne—Is defeated and retires—Death of Abdalrahman—Haschem ascends the throne—The holy war published—Accession of Al-Hakim.

“ WE recognize your authority,” wrote the Emir Jussuff and the rebellious Amer to the usurper Azfah, “ and now swear allegiance to your crown.” Such were the dispatches received at Damascus from the hands of the Spanish courier. The object of the two belligerents was

evident ; for, by so doing, they found means to continue their struggle for power, alike regardless of the troubles of the eastern, or of the misery of the western portions of the Arab empire. But in the Alcazar of Cordova a scene was enacting, equally unknown and unsuspected, that was to develop a power which would lay theirs prostrate in the dust, and terminate the office of Emir and the reign of the Caliphate for ever in Spain. In that council chamber the noble scheiks and elders of the Arabians had met in secret and weighty deliberation ; their object was to terminate the misery and civil wars of the country, and the means proposed was the election of an independent sovereign in Spain. To these the interesting news was communicated, that one royal descendant of Omwyah had

escaped the fury of the Abbassides, and his life and actual circumstances minutely detailed. "Orders arrived," said a noble scheik, "from that cruel Saffah to immolate two Ommiades who had taken up their residence at his court on the faith of his solemn promise to spare and to protect them. The one was named Suliman, the other Abdalrahman. The deed was perpetrated on the person of the former, while chance caused the absence and the safety of the latter. Receiving tidings from his friends, Abdalrahman fled to the desert, and lived with the Bedouin Arabs, the safe and wandering life of these primeval tribes. Yet he dreaded the vigilance and the vengeance of the usurper, and therefore retired still further into Africa, where, however, the governor sent out soldiers to seize his person, by the instructions of Saffah and

the description which had been sent of his person throughout the kingdom." In the humble tent of a Bedouin tribe, while the future founder of a splendid kingdom enjoyed the deep repose which he so much needed, the emissaries of the tyrant arrived to demand his person or his death. The holy ties of hospitality were regarded ; his benevolent protectors deceived the soldiers with a pretended hunting match in which they declared him occupied ; and they sped his flight across the desert of Sahara,* and to the

* The tribe of Zaneta and their city, Tahart, have now disappeared from the page of the historian, and from the map of the geographer. It becomes, therefore, difficult, if not impossible, to fix the exact neighbourhood of the refuge of the Ommiade ; but, from all the authorities I have been able to obtain, the probability is that the tribe occupied the southern extremity of the Beled-ul-Djerhid, or " Pays de dattes" and at the western extremity of the Sahara, or great

warlike tribe of Zaneta. Here his birth and misfortunes claimed respect and compassion ; and they swore to live for his service or to die in his defence. “ And there,” concluded the orator, “ amidst the Berber tribe of Zaneta, he still resides. I nominate him for our king, the last descendant of our illustrious house, the last survivor of our Caliph Haschem. Scheiks, I propose to you Abdalrahman as our Emir and our sovereign.”

His nomination was confirmed. Thaman and Wahib Ben Zoar were chosen as deputies to Abdalrahman, and they departed with the utmost secrecy on their eventful mission. In the desert they

desert which separates the states of Timbuctoo from Barbary and the Mediterranean shores.—Vide d’Anville, *Géogr.* vol. ii, p. 589. Pinkerton’s *Geograph.* p. 590-595. *Géographie Descriptive*, Malte-Brun, p. 709, and the opinion of Coridi, vol. i, p. 150.

sought and soon found the Omniade ; and while they informed him of their object, they did not conceal the difficulties attending its completion. But, assured that the Spanish Arabs were ready to meet him, and uphold his cause, the youthful Abdalrahman consulted with his friends, the Zanites, who implored him to accept the offer, and proposed to form a body guard for his protection. Seven hundred and fifty chosen horsemen were soon in readiness to accompany him, and Abdalrahman signified to the messengers from Cordova his resolution to accede to their proposal.

Meanwhile, fortune had declared for Jussuff, who was now conducting Amer Ben Amrou and his sons prisoners to Cordova. The possession of his rival's person he owed to the fears or the trea-

chery of the people of Saragossa. As he approached Cordova, rumour of the coming event reached his ears, and another messenger soon arrived, bringing the fatal tidings of Abdalrahman's landing, and of the revolution of all the government. Rendered almost frantic, Jussuff barbarously wreaked his vengeance on Amer and his sons, who expired in torments ; and then, after writing to his ally Samail, he marched on through various parts, to levy and assemble forces.

In the beginning of the year 755, Abdalrahman landed at Almuneçar, a seaport, about fifteen miles from Granada. An immense concourse of Andalusian nobles, and a countless multitude of the people, received the young hero on his landing, and loudly cried : " God protect Abdalrahman Ben Moawyah, King of

Spain!" The noble person and handsome features of the new sovereign, won for him favour on all sides, and the people of the southern provinces flocked in great masses to his standard; 25,000 men, besides his faithful Zanites, accompanied his march from Almuneçar to Seville, into which town he made his entry, amidst universal acclamations. These fearful tidings were received by the astounded Jussuff with the fiercest indignation; and he immediately proceeded to take such measures as would bring the struggle between him and the new pretender to an issue. He attempted to secure Cordova, Valencia, and Tadmorah in their obedience, by sending his three sons respectively to these provinces, while he raised large levies throughout Merida and Toledo. The

misfortunes of Abdalrahman had given him, in youth, the lessons of a sad experience ; and he possessed that important faculty by which an accurate judgment is formed from an intimate knowledge of mankind. He was, therefore, well aware of the difficulties which attended his enterprise ; and he resolved to enlist popular favour in his cause, by the achievement of feats of valour and energy, which, while they excited the admiration of the people, should leave no time for it to subside. After a slight and successful skirmish with the son, he proceeded to attack the father, Jussuff, with an impetuous valour, on the plains of Musara : 7,000 dead were left on the field of battle ; Samail and Jussuff fled in consternation, and the surrender of Cordova crowned the victory of Abdalrahman. The town of Seville followed

the example. The adherents of Jussuff were either discouraged or faithless ; the various towns sent deputies, who were enchanted at their courteous reception ; and while the valour of Abdalrahman obtained successive victories, his manners gained, and his virtues secured, the affections of his subjects.

After vainly attempting to stem the stream of his success, Samail and Jussuff condescended to treat for terms with the Adhagel,* whom they had at first despised ; their submission easily procured what their valour might long have contested. From Merida the King returned to Cordova, which henceforth became his favourite residence, and which

* Ad-H'Agèl : implying the intruder, pretender, adventurer.—Vide Lexicon de Sacy, letter Aleph.

he established as his capital. The clemency which he had extended to Jussuff was unable to conciliate or to appease him; and though Samail accepted office under the King, Jussuff again broke out into rebellion, exciting the people, wherever he passed, till near Lorca he met his defeat and death, after three years of continued tumults and insurrection. The same spirit of revenge, the same desire for sedition, occupied the minds of his children. The generals of Abdalrahman were sent against them, and one was slain in battle. Although clemency was vain, the generous monarch hesitated to shed the blood of the rebels. His kingdom continued to be alarmed and oppressed by revolt, till, at last, a fresh conspiracy of the ungrateful Samail having been discovered, he was put to death

in Toledo, about the year 760. The Gothic states of Asturia were governed by Froila, the son of Alphonso : too weak to offer resistance, they proposed a treaty, and submitted to a heavy tribute to the crown of Cordova. The kingdom at this time enjoyed a short peace, which was, however again broken by the rebellion of Hixem, a relation of Jussuff. This commenced at Toledo, and though sustained by the worst portions of the army, employed the forces of the King during many years. A more important event, however, soon occurred. A scheik of the ever-faithful tribe of the Zanites sent word through Temam, the hajib or chamberlain* to the King, of the projected

* This office, when first instituted, meant the keeper of the presence chamber, or more properly, master of

invasion of Spain by one Aly Ben Moqueir, Emir of one of the African dependencies, who intended to proclaim once more the name and authority of the Caliph of Bagdad. The arrival of Aly, and his abuse of the king, threw the provinces into great excitement, and alienated many from their allegiance; and he marched with a considerable force through many towns, in order to arrive at Toledo,

the curtain or door, but in later times, in Bagdad and Egypt, it became an office of high distinction. In Spain, the ministers or prime Vizirs always held it; and it must, therefore, be understood by the modern reader in quite a different sense from the common word, chamberlain.—Vide, *Cérémonies de l'Orient*, vol ii, p. 73, and *Bib. Or.* vol ii, p. 171. “El Vazir y el Hageb del rey de Corduba,” answers more properly to our terms of Prime Minister and first Lord of the Treasury to the King of Cordova.

where he expected the surrender of that city, from the promises of the seditious Hixem. But before he arrived there, the army of Abdalrahman opposed his further progress. The troops of Aly were totally defeated, himself slain, and his head placed on a pillar in the place of Cordova, proclaimed that thus perished the enemies of Abdalrahman, the successor of the Ommiades.

The lingering siege of Toledo was successfully put an end to by the skill and energy of Temam. The successor of the Goth Froila had attempted to infringe the treaty and refuse payment of the tribute. A decisive engagement with the royal forces induced him to adopt a more politic course ; and on payment of the required sum into the treasury of Cordova, the treaty was renewed, and peace

re-established. A rebellious spirit seemed still to prevail, which proved alike the instability of the government, and the remains of a faction not yet annihilated. The valour of Abdalrahman, however, the faithful energy of his Zanites, and the persevering constancy of his generals, Tamam and Abdalmalec, proved too strong for any adventurer to gain great or lasting advantages.

The most celebrated of these latter, Aboulgafar, attempted to seize Toledo ; the sagacity of Abdalmalec prevented his success, and on the banks of the Guadalquivir, near Seville, he gave battle to the rebel, and defeated him. Abdalmalec was here seriously wounded ; and Abdalrahman, wearied of these repeated wars, resolved at once to terminate them. He marched, therefore, in person against the

insurgents, and met them on the field of Lorca. A fierce contest ensued ; Abdalrahman was crowned with victory, and a long and tedious warfare ended, after six years' duration, in the death of Abdoul-gafar, and those of many others of the party henceforth extinct.

Thus was the new sovereignty of Spain confirmed. Circumstances, it must be allowed, had favoured the cause. First, the unsettled power of the Abassides, and their continual struggle for dominion, rendered them both unwilling and unable to give attention or assistance to the distant province of Andalouz. Abdalrahman had, for a time, feared the power of the emirs of Africa ; but his alarms must soon have been appeased and dispersed by the state of that continent, in which every petty governor was aiming at inde-

pendence, and either contending against each other, or rebelling against the authority of the caliphs. The seat of the central government had also been changed. The Abassides hated Damascus as the choice of the rival house, perhaps as the theatre of their own atrocities ; and they had removed to the city of Bagdad, on the remote banks of the Tigris, and thus added to the difficulty of governing Spain. Secondly, Abdalrahman had come into a land where the valour and the name of his family had always been held in high estimation ; where the leading nobles had every old prejudice enlisted in his favour, and where the people, tired out with the furious madness of civil war, hailed him, not only as the sovereign, but as the saviour, of their country. The war having thus far terminated, Abdalrahman

retired to Cordova, where the cares of private life, the charms of domestic affection, and the noble occupation of public embellishments and improvement filled up the measure of his time.

From the favourite Sultana, Havara, he had his youngest son, Hâschem ; two other sons, Suliman and Abdalla, composed the monarch's family. The eldest was sent to learn the rudiments of good government in Toledo ; the second was dispatched to Merida, for the same purpose, while Haschem, endeared to his father by his simplicity and his virtues, shared the pleasures of the palace, and enjoyed the advantages of the capital. In the enjoyment of the chace, or in his retirement amidst the luxuriant gardens of Cordova, the King forgot, in the arts of peace, the stern excitement of war, and

the desolating effects of even victory. From this happy dream, of four years' duration, Abdalrahman I. was awakened by the trumpet of a new, a foreign, and an unexpected invader. Charlemagne, King of the Franks, appeared on the heights of the Pyrenees, and thence descended, with a numerous horde, to the banks of the Ebro, sweeping all opposition before him, and laying waste the fertility of that district.

The motives for his strange appearance have been variously stated ; the petitions of some emirs to the King to render them independent, has been supposed and asserted ; the complaints of the Gallician christians have been assigned as the cause ; while the greater probability lies in the warlike character of Charlemagne, and the roving life of plunder so much

loved and followed by the Franks. But, whatever might have been his motives, his success was negative : after performing the Spanish march, he again retired from Spain. Mussulman and Christian, Asturian and Gascon, equally rose against him ; and in the passes near Roncevaux his army was defeated, and the Spaniards won back the vast spoils with which the Franks had enriched themselves during their excursion from the Pyrenees to the Ebro.

The expedition itself is now a subject of little or no importance. Whether Charles was called by some party into Spain, or whether his love of activity and pillage led him there, is now a point totally uninteresting ; and excepting that Roncevalles and the fall of Rolando, or Orlando, have furnished both Arab and

Christian with the theme of chivalry and romance, the march and retreat would probably both have been forgotten. The Spaniards* are too proud of a victory which history ascribes to the Gascons, and romance to the Saracens. The ruins of Palmyra derive a casual splendour from the nakedness of the surrounding desert, and the genius and bravery of Charlemagne were the more conspicuous, since they were without a rival in his own times, and were a wondrous contrast to the tame imbecility of his degenerate posterity.†

* Fall and Decline, vol. ix. p. 177.

† For this, as well as the general events of this and the succeeding chapters, the reader may consult Deping, *Hist. Gener. Mariana, Historia Hispan. Ascar-gosta, Hist. d'Espagne. Casiri, Bib. Arab. Hisp. Eben Maus MSS. 371.383. Bib. du Roi. Kothab.*

The last band of the christians had hardly disappeared among the gorges of the Pyrenees ere Abdalrahman regained possession of Zaragossa and other northern towns of Spain, and everywhere re-established order and law. Called by the request of the uncle of Alphonso, he interfered to arrange the rival pretensions of Maragottos* and his nephew, and aided by a partiality which it was hardly possi-

No. 383, *ibidem*, and Conde, *Los Arabes en España*, with the agreeable history of Cardonne, *de la Domination des Arabes en Afrique et en Espagne*, Gibbon's *Fall and Decline*, vol. x., and at times the eloquent but too partial narration of the Archbishop of Toledo.

* The Maragottos here mentioned was the offspring of mixed parents, and hence, perhaps, his name, Maurogothos; and hence certainly the partiality of Abdalrahman.

ble for his justice to repress, he decided for the former, who entered into the treaty already existing, paying the tribute to the king, and thereby maintaining peace. The sparks of revolt, again kindled by the last remnants of the expiring faction of Jusseff, Samail and their adherents, were quenched by the skilful energy of Abdalrahman and his generals. The foreign invader was successfully repulsed, the domestic traitors effectually exterminated. Thus, the remainder of the monarch's life was rendered happy ; and, occupied with the internal polity of the state, and the general happiness of his people, Abdalrahman enjoyed the serenity of peace in the close of an eventful reign. Agriculture was resumed, public confidence was gradually re-established, and the name of Omwyah's

descendant deserved and received the blessings of his people. The laws were modified, extended, and consolidated, the roads were re-opened, and fully maintained, a greater number of magistrates added to the municipality of the towns, and a vast plan for public instruction suggested and commenced. The religion of the state was endowed with numerous mosques, and the institution of a body of readers, or expounders of the Koran, were attached to each temple. Emulous of the mosque of Bagdad, Abdalrahman resolved to rival it by a similar erection in his favourite city. His energy and humility were conspicuously displayed, since he drew out the plan, and worked every day at its construction with his own hands. The son of his faithful general, Abdalmalec, had the credit of

destroying some rebel bands, and the King condescended to bestow on him the hand of his grand-daughter, the child of his favourite, Haschem. The marriage of Abdallah and Kathira was celebrated in Cordova with the greatest splendour, and the inhabitants entertained for many days, with a brilliant succession of fêtes and tournaments.

The sagacious mind of Abdalrahman foresaw all the dangers which his people would incur, in case of his death happening without his having fixed a successor to his throne. In a constitutional monarchy the laws would have called the eldest son to the crown, and, in default, then the next by priority of birth ; but in the despotic government of the East, the throne was filled by election, and the customs of Asia were respected and fol-

lowed by the Arabs of Spain. Under these circumstances Abdalrahman yielded to his own predilection in favour of Haschem. He nominated him as his successor ; and in an assembly of all the provincial governors, convoked in Cordova, he obtained a ratification of the act. Among them were seen Suleiman and Abdalla, who testified neither surprise nor resentment at the proceeding. The king then left Cordova for Merida, leaving Abdalla as his lieutenant at the former city. The struggles of his early life, the anxieties of government, and the harassing events of his reign, had undermined his health. Thirty years Abdalrahman held the sceptre of Spain, and his death (in 787 or 788) was deeply regretted by all its inhabitants. The greatest honours were paid to his memory, and a large concourse

followed the remains and mourned the national loss, from the walls of Merida to the sepulchre of the kings at Cordova.*

* The year which announced death to Abdalrahman beheld the rise of Edris Ben Abdalla, a descendant of Ali, (the son-in-law of Mohammed), and the founder of the capital of Fez and the empire of Morocco. The Edressah family reigned for upwards of a century, and counted among its honours not the least, the possession of the erudite Sherif Al-Edrissi, whose ample work on Geography and descriptions of countries enjoyed a high and lasting reputation. See Casiri, Cardonne, and D'Herbelot, vol. i, p. 624-625. The confusion (and it must indeed be great) which arises in the reader's mind when he peruses the names of the provinces and cities of Spain, as given by the Arabians, and compares them with either the Gothic or Spanish appellations, may find some relief by the study of the detailed account of that country given by the Sherif, and translated into Spanish and valuably annotated by Conde, in 1 vol. 8vo. Madrid 1799. Aledris, Bib. du roi.

The Khotbah* was pronounced for Haschem, who ascended his father's throne, and appeared determined to follow in his footsteps. Temperance, humanity, and a love of justice were the characteristics of the new sovereign, which acquired for him the honourable titles of Al-Hadi-Rhadi, the just and

* After the morning service in the mosque, the preacher delivered his khotbah, or sermon; at the conclusion, he offered up praise to God, celebrated and blessed the memory of the Prophet, and offered up a prayer for the reigning sovereign, saying: "O Allah, protect and prosper our caliph, and thy people, who by thy grace had Mohammed for their Prophet." This formed the khotbah, and the performance at the accession of a new sovereign was customary. Thus, we see Saffah, the founder of the Abassides, hearing the khotbah, as one of the first marks of public sovereignty. Vide *Bib. Orientale*, vol. ii, p. 448-449, and vol. iii, p. 152.

good "Hœres." But while all seemed to augur a peaceful and a prosperous reign, the brothers of Haschem, Suleiman and Abdalla, raised the standard of independence, and assumed the right of exercising, in their own provinces of Toledo and Merida, the qualities of sovereigns. An amiable weakness in the brother triumphed, for a time, over the justice of the prince, and the two Walis were allowed to concert, to conspire, and to rebel. At length, in the valley of Buktar, Suleiman and Haschem met to try their respective force, and the defeat and flight of Suleiman confirmed the power of the king. Again the former united with the banditti of the mountains, and was again defeated by the faithful Abdallah, the son-in-law of Haschem. Another attempt to raise a party

in his favour was equally fruitless ; and the authority of the king being generally respected, and his forces everywhere victorious, compelled Suleiman to accept the offer of large sums of “ peace money,” and to retire to Tangiers. The momentary excitement, caused by these revolts, soon subsided, and the different lieutenants of the King, from time to time, entered Cordova with all the ensigns of victory.

In the recent division of Spain, Abdalrahman had ceased to enumerate the province of the Narbonese Gaul ; and thus, at a sacrifice of his own vanity, had preserved the peace of his people. But the idea of retaking northern Spain, and the towns of the Narbonne, now inflamed the mind of Haschem. In order to effect this object, large armies

were indispensable, and to procure those resources there was but one mode. Haschem published the Alighed, or holy war. At the hour of prayer, from the Imaum's pulpit, in every mosque throughout the superb dominions of the Ommiades, the proclamation resounded, and a general enthusiasm answered to the King's wishes, while those who were disabled, from infirmities or other causes, from enlisting under the holy standard, contributed money, horses, and supplies for the wants of the faithful, on this solemn occasion. Vain were the attempts to discover what the true motives were in this proceeding. Two hundred years after this period, the historian smiles while he relates the same enthusiastic folly, when the Roman Imaum unfurled his banner; yet when he states the pretext then urged, he can

be at no loss to account for the motive.

But the enthusiasm of the Moslem has ever been more conspicuous and his fanaticism more persevering than those of the children of the cross, and we may perhaps believe that a religious fervour only inspired the King and people, yet cooler reflection leads to the more rational conclusion that the policy of Haschem was to inflame the ardour of the Arabs against foreign enemies, and thus to extinguish the brand of civil discord in the purer flame of national glory, and religious enthusiasm.

A body of 85,000 men in two divisions marched northwards in the cause, one half to attack the Asturians, the other to invade the Pyrenees. The latter was

commanded by the King's son-in-law Abdalla.

The army of the Asturias was at first successful; Galicia was ravaged, Leon was invaded, and the Goths fearfully alarmed; the feeble son of Friola divided the throne of the Spanish Christians with an aged uncle or relation. The warriors of Asturias called for Alphonso to lead them to the conquest, and he answered to their summons. At his appearance the scene was considerably changed: by his skill and bravery the royal troops were harassed, and if not defeated, at length forced to retire, and the Goths regained possession of all the booty seized.

The son-in-law of Haschem had greater success among the Pyrenean mountains.

The successful siege of Girona attested his skill and activity but the seizure of Narbonne, was followed by a barbarous slaughter of its inhabitants, and a general devastation of the surrounding country. These severe measures served only to exasperate the Narbonnese ; they all rose to repulse so cruel and so formidable an enemy, and the fierce battle of Carcassonne, though decided in the Arab's favour led to no further result, since he instantly returned into Spain. The enormous booty, which amounted to more than one million sterling, was devoted to the works of the great Mosque at Cordova, and the prudent Haschem disgusted with a holy war, put down the Alighed, and gave all his attention to cultivate the arts of peace and the noble science of augmenting his people's prosperity.

Now, perhaps for the first time since Taric landed on the rock of Spain, the kingdom enjoyed the fruits of good government in a time of peace, and under a prince, whose virtues, sagacity, and love of justice were so conspicuous. The city of Cordova began to show marks of that future splendour which she was afterwards destined to possess. The palaces, the gardens, the new streets, the mint,* the library, the great bridge,

* The money coined at the Cordova mint was the same as that struck at Damascus. The coin bore the inscription "Allah is God—and there is but one God," and on the reverse the words "In the name of Allah, this piece was struck in Andalousia," &c. Vide Casiri, Conde, and Numismatic memoirs of the east. Bib. du roi, vol. 2.

"Up to this year," says Richardson, 695, "the receipts and disbursements of the treasury of the

all had been repaired, augmented, or reconstructed ; and Haschem finished the labours which his father had commenced by completing the grand Mosque. This noble monument of the Spanish capital,* was 600 feet long by 250 wide, 1500 pillars of polished marble supported its stupendous roof, and nineteen doors of bronze, of the most exquisite workmanship, formed the grand entrance. At

Caliphs were written in the Greek tongue, and the coins were invariably with Greek inscriptions, and the Persian coins of the Ashcaman or Arsacidæ had also Greek inscriptions which were probably introduced by Alexander or his successors.” Dissertation, p. 64.

* For a more minute description see Casiri, Cardonne, and Ximenes Roderick. “ Nul autre peuple que les Arabes n’aurait pu concevoir ou exécuter de pareils ouvrages,” says Millot speaking of their Mosque.—H. U.

night, upwards of 6000 silver lamps, fed with sweet scented oil, diffused a perfume and a holy radiance throughout the vast structure, and the sanctum or sacred oratory of the Imaum was of massive gold.

The King also brought water into all parts of the city by the erection of ornamental fountains, while the construction of canals spread around health and general utility. Schools for the Arabic language were founded in many cities of the kingdom, and the people were commanded or persuaded to acquire a knowledge of its rich and harmonious dialect, and to abandon the bald latinity, rude remnant of a former age. Yet while Haschem so greatly encouraged the elegant and the useful, he did not forget those institutions which contribute to the mainten-

ance of justice and good will among a nation.

The laws were most impartially administered, and the King gave, in his own instance, a striking example,* while he followed up his father's wise policy by encouraging to the utmost the intermarriage of his Arabian and Christian subjects. The remainder of his virtuous life

* They proposed to the prince to buy a property which was up for public competition ; but Haschem refused, fearful that the appearance of his factors might depress competition, and injure the proprietor, and Haschem inspired by this act of justice, gave vent to his feelings in a poetic effusion where he declares his love for gardens and flowers, yet avows that his people far take precedence in his soul. Vide Casiri, Cardonne, and for the verses, Conde, *Los Arabes en España* vol 1, and the appendix to these vols.

was spent in the calm contemplation of the past, the present, and the future, and his hours of relaxation were employed in the innocent pastime of gardening and botany. An astrologer is reported to have warned him, in the ambiguous language of prophecy, of his approaching death. Although Haschem might have doubted the art of the magician, he could not deny the chances of humanity, and remembering the wise conduct of his father on a parallel occasion, he established, as his successor, his son Al-Hakim. After this event, his health sensibly diminished, and when at last warned of the approach of the silent and relentless foe, he composed his mind for the change about to take place and eased his conscience by delivering the following discourse to his son :

“ May the advice of a father be listened to. O my beloved son, the kingdoms of this world belong to God, from whom we receive all things ; may we conform to his wish, may we act up to his laws, for therefore are we placed in high authority. May thy impartial justice bless and protect thy people, and may thy ministers fear to use thy name as a shield for any iniquity ; be gentle, be merciful, for thus is God. Let the choice of thy governors be guided by thy knowledge of their able virtues, and be mindful to resent all injuries done to thy people by their or their agent’s means. In the army preserve a strict, yet mild discipline, and beware the extremes of ferocity and weakness ; the one will induce the hatred of thy soldier, the other, his contempt.

“ Be above all things assured of this

great maxim, that a man only really is a king when he reigns in the hearts of his people. Where he is a tyrant or a fool, there will be civil discord or general insecurity ; but that throne based on the affections of the subject is built upon a rock against which the arts of the wicked traitor, the arms of the stranger shall never avail.

“ Protect agriculture and all classes of thy industrious people, and so live, that thy numerous subjects may rest secure beneath the shadow of thy throne, and in the full enjoyment of property and peace, they and their children’s children may bless my son Al-Hakim’s name.”

Such were the virtuous precepts of the expiring Haschem, and if not superior, they are at least equal to any that are so

highly vaunted, either in a Pagan or a Christian age.

The year 796 completed the life of Haschem, and his son ascended his throne to prove the strength which these admirable maxims had on his conduct and to run his destined course. Whatever might have been the result, had the good fortune and peaceful reign of his father been accorded to the new monarch it is impossible to determine; since, a series of intestine feuds and rebellions, and a persevering war which ravaged and alarmed the frontiers commenced at the death of Haschem, and continued to that of his son.

The two uncles of the King were no sooner apprized of his accession, than they once more raised the standard of revolt. Suleiman assembled a large

force of barbarians at Tangiers, and sailed immediately for the Spanish coast, while Abdalla, in his government of Seville, by corrupting the integrity of the Walis, obtained possession of that province.

The valour and the youth of Al-Hakim saw these proceedings without dismay, and vigorously prepared to defeat them. But, while marching for this purpose he received tidings of the recapture of various towns in the Narbonne, and deeming this of more importance, he hastened in person to the frontiers. His presence changed the scene ; in a succession of the most rapid and gallant manœuvres he regained the whole of the towns seized by the Christians, and returned loaded with booty and slaves. Leaving one of his generals to act in check on the frontier operations, he appeared with the

rapidity of lightning before Toledo ; he thus astounded and alarmed his enemies while he soon after overthrew their pretensions and their hopes in a pitched battle.

Suleiman and Abdalla escaped into Valencia, where they busied themselves in again collecting forces to maintain their cause.

But their nephew allowed them no respite, he arrived in Murcia, sought them out, and by a signal defeat, dispersed their army ; and while the death of Suleiman confirmed the power of Al Hakim, the tears he shed on his uncle's body attested the natural goodness of his heart. Abdalla sued for and easily obtained pardon ; he was advised to retire in honourable exile to Tangiers, while his two sons Esfah and Casim were received at

the monarch's court, whose generous youth obliterated the past by bestowing on his cousin the hand of his sister Alinska.

The war of the frontiers still continued. The brave leader of the Asturians, Alphonso, had sought the assistance of Charlemagne, and the son of that hero, Louis, known to history only by his surname of Debonnaire, headed the Franks on this expedition. Partial success attended his operations : the absence of almost all the great Arab generals, and the treachery of one, Maklough, enabled them to ravage the Barcelonnese territory, to capture Gironne and Tortosa, and, at length, Barcelona itself. The King advanced against them, to terminate the expedition. He prudently provided for the safety of the towns

through which he passed on his route, and then proceeded to the seat of war. His army, however, fought few battles, and Al-Hakim was contented by the defeat and execution of Maklouh, whose treason had so much contributed to the success of the Franks. Thence the King returned to Cordova, without even approaching Barcelona.

Joussouff, the son of Amrou, one of the royal generals, had been entrusted with the Waliship of the fickle Toledo, and had, as much from inexperience, as from any other cause, incurred the hatred of the citizens ; for, confounding the innocent with the guilty, he had at length pushed his severity so far, that the populace rose tumultuously against him, and seized his person. Their urgent petition to the King occasioned the necessity of

Joussouff's removal to the smaller town of Tudela ; and he was replaced as Wali by the greater experience of his father, Amrou. The new governor watched for and seized the earliest opportunity of revenging this insult on the Toledans. Four hundred inhabitants were sacrificed to his malignant revenge ; and the names of Amrou and Al-Hakim were joined in the common curse. The city of Merida experienced some agitation at the disgrace of Esfah, who at this period seems to have incurred the anger of his cousin ; but the affection of a wife and the influence of a sister, in this instance, prevailed, and public order and domestic peace were shortly restored.

From this epoch, however, the character and the occupations of Al Hakim underwent an entire and inexplicable

change. Although war still raged on the Gallician and the Narbonnese frontiers, we see him no more commanding his armies, or heading the assault. The youthful Abdalrahman, his son, figured in his place ; his success was brilliant, rapid, and continuous ; and, although Catalonia was at last lost to the Arabian power, yet Narbonne, Gironne and many important places, were won back, by his victorious arms, to the crown of Cordova. Al-Hakim had retired to that city. On his arrival, his suspicions had been alarmed by the details of a serious conspiracy against his throne and life ;* and three hundred executions, which took place in that capital, were deemed neces-

* Laid before the King by Casim, who had, during his absence, been appointed governor of Cordova.

sary to secure his safety, or to satisfy his vengeance. The alarmed people forgot their respect for the prince in their indignant hatred at the tyrant, who, henceforth plunged in sensuality, indulged the impulses of his gloomy suspicions by the continual slaughter of his subjects.

Abdalrahman was publicly declared heir to the crown, and his cousins, Esfah and Casim, were the first to swear fidelity to him. The young prince continued to be the support of his father's power, the commander of his armies, and the defender of the kingdom. In order to raise his dignity, or provide for his safety, a body guard was formed for him, and to render their fidelity more secure, a fixed pay was ordained to them. The method of raising this sum was by a tax,

exactly similar to the Octroi.* This mode was an innovation, and excited great murmurs among the rich and thriving inhabitants of Cordova.† A

* By laying a tax on all articles of consumption on entering the gates of the city. It was then, and is now, a mode of contribution universally hated. The system of the French octroi is at once paltry, irritating and obnoxious; and Cordova is not the only place and kingdom where this tax has raised angry feelings and tumultuous demonstrations.

† Perhaps the greater part of the crimes of the early Cæsars arose from their having to support a large power and a luxurious establishment, with very limited means. Murder was the only ways and means allowed the Emperors; and as only the rich fell, and their spoils were divided among the princes and the people, these latter in that monstrous age cared little how, so they enjoyed their shows. A philosopher of that period might have calculated with nicety the number of murders in each reign by the virtuous economy or luxurious expenditure of the Emperor. A

politic prince would have timely conceded, but Al-Hakim evinced only his love of despotism, by ordering ten of the most seditious to be executed. A rescue of these unfortunate victims was effected by the populace, and both the city and suburbs revolted in open mutiny. The vengeance of Al-Hakim knew no bounds. The streets of Cordova run with blood ; the suburbs were given up to fire and pillage ; and the infuriated despot at length terminated the horrid scene, by an enactment so monstrous, that were it not

new tax also, in despotic governments, and attempted on the inhabitants of the capital, has rarely been successful ; and when the wily Augustus attempted the legacy tax, all concurred that it was a complete failure. See the erudite dissertation on the works of Tacitus, by Dureau de la Malle, vol. i, p. 105, and Rœderer, vol. ii, Depping, *Hist. Générale*, etc.

well authenticated, it would not be deemed credible, and for which insanity can plead the only excuse. Al-Hakim gave orders, "that all the inhabitants of the ill fated suburbs should quit for ever their homes, taking with them their families!"* The exiles of Cordova "wandered, in pursuance of this cruel mandate, in search of a home and of a resting place." Toledo received some, eight to ten thousand of them accepted the offer of the Emir of Morocco, and the new Fez received the children of the Mosarabians, and the industrious subjects of Al-Hakim.† Some adventured

* Arab. MSS. of Toledo, translated, No. 1873 B. Bib. du Roi.

† The Edrissites were a sagacious family, and knew how to profit by the madness of another. A reflection will occur, in viewing the fierce and inexplicable

on the ocean, and the conquest of Crete is due to their valour and enterprize.*

The maniac who had caused the disaster, passed the wretched remainder of

vengeance of Al-Hakim—and that is, that he may have been urged and excited by treachery. Casim was the governor of the city; from him the King learnt all, and though he was bound by the ties of gratitude, by his oath, and by relationship, Abdalla might write and suggest that were Al-Hakim removed, Esfah might reign, or the claims of Casim be strong on the suffrages of the nobles.

* Cardonne, Novaire. They sailed in twenty gallees, and therefore, says Gibbon, this warfare must be branded with the name of piracy! Their chief was Abou Kab, or Cahab. They first pitched their camp in the bay of Suda; but led on by an apostate monk to the more desirable and eastern part of the island, their fortress Candax extended to the whole island, under the corrupt and modern appellation of Candia.—Vol x. c. 51, Fall and Decline, Depping.

his days in the passions of sensuality, fear, and frenzy ; the torments of his mind allowed him no rest, and the disturbed fancies of his guilty conscience undermined his health, and prostrated his mortal strength. Life dragged on a heavy and unceasing curse, till the miserable and misguided sovereign found at length that relief in death, as acceptable to himself as the news of it proved to be to his terrified, indignant, and alienated people.

CHAPTER III.

Abdalrahman II ascends the throne—Abdallah's rebellion and death—Frontier War—Rebellions in Merida and Toledo—Norman pirates—Mohammed Ben Abdalrahman's accession—Religious sects—Omar Ben Haffsoun the Bandit—Peace with the Asturians—Sudden death of Mohammed—Almondhir's reign and death—Abdallah.

SPONTANEOUS fetes proclaimed the happiness of the Spanish Arabs, and welcomed Abdalrahman II to the throne. The favourite of the army by his valour, of the people by his kind heart and upright mind, and highly gifted by nature and education, he seemed destined to rule with vigorous justice, and to embellish his reign with all that was eminent in arts or sciences. Poets, musicians, physicians and astronomers flocked to the

palace of Cordova, where the young monarch welcomed them with honour, and entertained them with liberality, and where they received a still higher pleasure in feeling that their works were justly appreciated, and their importance duly acknowledged. The state of the capital, at this period, was one of great splendour and much interest. In a city, whose natural situation was most lovely,*

* Cordoba, situated within five to six miles of the lateral chain of the Sierra Morena, stands on the Guadalquivir, and in the heart of one of the richest tracts of land, both for culture, pasturage, and minerals, in Europe. The climate, otherwise sultry, is refreshed by the ^{the} mountain breezes. The Arabians built immense fortifications, which still remain, and the great mosque, now the catholic cathedral, attests the magnitude of their designs and execution. The walls of the latter are encrusted with verses from the Koran, which are regarded by the present age with

the palaces of the king and of the chief nobility vied with each other in elegance and design, while the mosques and public buildings, interspersed with large and richly cultivated gardens, extending

an ignorant disdain. Corduba, so called by the Romans, and Corthobah by the Arabs, was ever a place of great importance in Spain, and in those remote times was the scene of a certain magnificence, since we find Scapula, who revolted against Sextus Pompeius (A. U. C. 709), resided some time in this town, where he displayed his riches and his *taste* in feasting on gold plates, and drinking from *gold* cups filled with *beer*, and wine mixed with spikenard and rosin ! Cordova is the country of the two Seneca, and of their relation, the author of the *Pharsalia*. Of Avaroës, Avicenna, and the christian soldier Hernando, called Gonsulvo de Cordova.—Vide Danville, vol. 2, p. 209. Al Edris, p. 113. Strabo, Lib. 3. Pinkerton, p. 138. Malte-Brun, *Géogr. Descript.* p. 503. *Bibl. Or.*, vol. 1, p. 545.

over a vast surface, added health and cheerfulness to the scene. The well paved streets, the highly-carved and salubrious fountains, the noble aqueducts, and the marble edifices struck the pleased beholder with surprise, nor was he less astonished at the affluence of the court than at the easy prosperity of the citizens. In the interior of that court the arts of music and sculpture, poetry, and history, and the abstruse sciences were cultivated with assiduity and success. The celebrated El Lahti (the learned Andalouz, as he was styled in the East from whence he had just returned) was the friend of Abdalrahman, and the tutor of his sons. The skill of the master was proved in the excellence of the scholars, who received with pride, and displayed with equal

ability the offices of poet and orator at the funerals of their illustrious race*.

But from the midst of these elegant and honourable occupations which, while they add to the enjoyment, increase the utility of life, Abdalrahman was summoned to the harsh sound and pestiferous atmosphere of war and rebellion. In the city of Tangiers the aged Abdallah still lived to dream of visions of greatness which he was never destined to enjoy, and to concert schemes of invasion and

* Conde, vol. 1, p. 278. Bibl. Or., vol. 2, p. 531. Owing to the suggestions of Laiti, the polished Abdalrahman invited Zeriab, the famous musician of Persia, over to Spain, and founded a school of music in Cordova, and a band for the palace, which was carefully fostered by his successors.—Vide Car-donne, tome 1, p. 283-5. Conde and Casiri, Bib. Arab. Hisp.

conquest, if not for himself, for the grandeur of his family. The clemency of his nephew had been forgotten, the "peace money," received from the generous father was now employed to destroy the authority of the son, and Abdallah reappeared in Spain with his usual pretexts of the rights of birth,*

* This right, among the Asiatics, was purely imaginary, among the Mussulman contrary to the law and practice of the Prophet. The Arabs and the Franks have equally entertained the law of election as the symbol of national liberty, and both may have found in practice that it was the root of tyranny. For, after all, as has been remarked by Gibbon, "the acknowledged right of birth extinguishes the hopes of faction, and its conscious security disarms the cruelty of the monarch. To the firm establishment of this idea we owe the peaceful succession of our European monarchies. To the defect of it, we must attribute those frequent civil wars through which an Asiatic

and of justice for himself and fair promises for the ears of the populace. Backed by the Berbers and the bandits of Africa and Andalouz, he again raised his standard. The royal legions of Cordova met him in Valencia, defeated, and forced him to retire to the city of that province, and there the feeble old man had recourse to the special invocation of heaven, to decide the justice of his cause. The credulity or the vanity of the Arabian historians give us to understand that his vows were heard: at the end of his prayer he was struck suddenly to the earth, and the fit of illness or enthusiasm was construed by his dispirited followers as the answer from

despot is obliged to cut his way to the throne of his fathers." Vol. 1, p. 271. F and D.

God. Abdallah acquiesced, and rising, cried : “ O Allah ! I resign myself to thy decrees ;” and the news of his submission was eagerly carried to the King. At his court, Esfah and Casim had appeared as intercessors for their father, the mind of Abdalrahman was generous, the submission of Abdallah seemed sincere, and to the pardon which was extended to him, was added an oblivion of his past life by a mark of confidence in his remaining days, since he was given Tadmorah, with the power, during his own life, of exclusive sovereignty in that province. Abdallah died the following year, and the King seized that occasion to invest the property of his great uncle in the hands of his children, and to make that important law, which allowed hereditary succession to children, release of dowry

to widows, and the right of testators to bequeath away one third of their property to any stranger they might choose to select*.

The war on the frontiers had again commenced. The Christians had chosen the moment of intestine commotion among the Arabs to push their advantages, and extended their conquests in the North. But the activity of Abdal-

* Arab MSS. of Toledo. *Leges Hispan.* No. 71, Bib. du Roi. The succession of children, in right of inheritance, was no dangerous innovation, and one on the contrary Abdalrahman would have been glad to establish in his own family. The second point was an old acknowledged custom among the women of Arabia. (Vide Richardson's *Dissertations*, Part II., Sect. 2, p. 331-2. The third was a just and liberal enactment. It does not appear that more than *personal* property descended to the children by the law of Abdalrahman. Vide *Leg. Hisp.*

rahman defeated their views. He appeared at Tortosa, forced the enemy to retire within the walls of Barcelona, besieged, and took that city, and then pursued the fugitives to the Pyrenees. Hence he returned to Cordova with the ensigns and the fruits of victory. Obeidalla, the youngest son of Abdallah atoned for the conduct of his father by his services of fidelity in the field. Invested with the command, he led the royal forces against the Asturians and Navarese, and obtained many decisive advantages, and in the battle of Pampe-luna he gained so complete a victory, that he sent the generals of the enemy prisoners to Cordova as proofs of his valour and success. The five following years were employed by Obeidalla in checking the aggressions of the frontier,

by Abdalrahman in the prosecution of the arts, sciences, and works of public utility, and by the factious in fomenting discontent, exciting discussions and tumults, and successfully preparing the provinces for long and open rebellion. The great cities of Spain were governed by two officers in the King's name, the Wali*, or governor of the province, and

* Besides the Wali and the Wazir, the other offices seem to have been in the civil administration of affairs : the Wazir Medini or councillor of state in the capital, of which there were many, and indeed all the King's immediate ministers, were Wazirs. The Cadi or Alcaide, whose name and office still exist at this day in Spain, the Fakhirs or Faquirs, jurisconsults, and doctors of law, the Mollahs or moderators of the assembly of the preachers. The Imam or head of the assembly of the preachers, and the Khathiebs or Chetibs preachers and expounders in the mosques. In the military department, we find the Al Hadi or

the Wazir or Lieutenant of the city, which last if the Wali was forced to absent himself, ruled in both for the time. Each new king, at his accession, always confirmed or annulled the list of governors throughout the kingdom, and in the latter case nominated fresh ones. The most important duties of the Walis were to raise, “as by royal ordinances,” the taxes from each province, and to remit such portions of them as were decreed by law to the King’s exchequer at Cordova. They were enjoined

heir to the throne, who was generally commander-in-chief of the land forces, the grand admiral, the Emirs or generals of the armies by sea and land, and the subordinate grades.—Vid Bibl. Or. Passim. Casiri, Cardonne, Escorial MSS. *El Gamri*. Bib. du Roi, Conde, Ascargota. Dynasties d’Abulpharge Latine Pocock, &c.

to reside constantly in their governments, (unless specially summoned to the capital, or to join the holy standard in war), and to give their best attention to the administration of the province, according to the special or general policy of an Asiatic Government.

As this was despotic in Cordova, it was equally so in all the other great towns, such as Toledo, Merida, Saragossa, Murcia and Lisbon, and as the people knew not how to distinguish the measures ordained by the central government, from those which sprung from the caprice or inability of the Wali, they must have evidently been in a better or worse position, according to the good or evil character of their officer. Although in Cordova, the people were from the presence of the court and the privileges of a

capital in general loyal and contented, the provincial cities were subject to oppression, corruption, and constant revolt. Each city was also castellated or fortified, and this, though an advantage, as far as general security was concerned, was, when intestine commotion prevailed, a great and growing evil. It gave a discontented emir every facility to rebel, and offered every obstacle to the suppression of revolt. The wise suggestions of different statesmen to dismantle the towns, had been often and vainly repeated. The Spanish monarchs disregarded the advice, and either from prejudice or some undefined fears, refused to allow the destruction of these strongholds, thus seeming to prefer repressing the recurrence of civil war, by force of arms, to checking it by a sagacious poli-

cy. This mistake and its results alike fatal to King and people, continued to prevail, and the Christian enemies of the Arab, seizing* each occasion with happy ability, at last succeeded in suppressing the creed and the banner of the Prophet throughout the Peninsula. The lenient policy of the Arabians after victory had allowed, from the commencement, the exercise of their religious faith and worldly professions to their Christian subjects ; by the former privilege these had become cemented into one body, which grew in riches, strength, and spirit by the enjoyment of the latter. The followers of Moses, also a large and influential class, had suffered to a great extent in that point, where they have ever been most sensitive, and their skill in amassing riches had been too often abused by the

violence with which it had been wrested from them. These two powerful bodies were therefore always ready to lend their assistance to the factious ;* and the discontented Wali was sure of their aid to foment and keep up rebellion, and all these elements of discord combined, now appeared in array against the power of Abdalrahman II.

Mohammed Ben Abdoulgabar headed the people of Merida in a violent assault on the authorities of the town, in which the houses of the magistrates were broken into, and themselves sacrificed to popular fury. The King's governor retired in haste, and the factious Abdoulgabar entrenched in the fortifications of that splendid city, flattered himself in that position and with the aid of all the bandits of the neighbourhood, he might

wait the arrival of the royal troops to contest and overturn the power of the sovereign. The King instantly sent Abdalrouf one of his generals with the Algarve legions to suppress the mutiny. The inflated vanity of Mohammed induced him to defy all terms of submission, and the siege had been long and doubtful, had not the good sense of the citizens put an end to it and reestablished the King's authority.

They sent six of their eminent men to treat the terms of capitulation; the strictest orders had been given by the King not to pillage or injure either person or property. In silence, the legions of Abdalrouf entered the gates, and with the most rigid discipline; they obeyed the orders of their general and ere twelve hours had passed, 700 bodies of the

rebels lay dead in the streets, while order and peace reigned undisputed in Merida. This was immediately followed by a similar explosion in Toledo, where private revenge gave the chief impulse to the rebellion. Haschem Ben Atik, a rich and powerful citizen, complained of the injustice done him by Abmaffah, the King's Wazir ; he spread vast sums of money among the people, and bribed the Berber guards of the Alcazar to espouse his cause. These affected to be alarmed at the fury of the people, who besieged the gates, and fled in trepidation before the multitudes ; those who remained faithful were slain, and the Wazir would also have fallen a victim, had not chance favoured him. Absent from the town, when the revolt broke out, he fled to Calatrava, and thence

dispatched a messenger to Cordova with the news. The Prince Ommiah, with a large body of the royal horse guards, proceeded towards Toledo, while Abmaffah advanced on his side with a strong body of troops. Within Toledo, the rebels took energetic measures to resist the attack. A sally from the gates against Abmaffah's detachment was successful, and the vanity of Haschem and the hopes of his soldiers, augmented in equal proportion. The General Abdalrouf had fully succeeded by mild and politic measures in calming the rebellion in Merida, and when he quitted that city to march on Toledo, he left the poor fully employed, the police and military well provided, and the rebels driven far from its environs. The King had naturally hoped that the same happy

results might attend Abdalrouf at Toledo, but these hopes were not fulfilled at that time, since the only advantage obtained by Abdalrouf against the Toledan mutineers was in an onset near the banks of the small river Alberca. No sooner too had this general retired from Merida, than the rebellious bands re-entered that town, inhumanly murdered two of the magistrates, and planted the flag of sedition on its ramparts. Abdalrahman determined to put an end to these scenes, advanced to the siege in person, and his army prepared to carry the town by assault, when the King adopted a milder course. Written pardons attached to arrows were shot into the town, and the many who read, reflected, laid down their arms, and sought the standard of their sovereign.

The rebels were dismayed and silently departed, and when the inhabitants sent a deputation to offer their excuses and to sue for pardon, the generous King replied, that he rejoiced, the stern sword of justice was sheathed on a day of so much joy, when the affections of his people were restored to him ; and if God would not turn the hearts of the rebellious, he at all events hoped he should have the power to prevent their disturbing the peace of his people. The stay of Abdalrahman in Merida was prolonged for many days, during which, his presence confirmed the wavering, and cheered the loyal, and the only want of sagacity which he displayed was in the mandate to rebuild the fortifications, which had been destroyed in the siege. For nine months the skill and audacity of Ha-

schem defied the royal arms, famine, at length, forced his valour to submit, his guilty head was the only one that fell, and the King having appointed Abdalrouf, Wali of the province, recompensed the misfortunes and fidelity of Abmaffah, by a place at court.

The affairs of the Asturias were guided by the double sovereignty of Alphonso and his cousin Ramiro. The intrigues of the Christians were numberless, their treasons incessant, their perfidy complete. They aided with money and with men the rebel of the Arabian cities, and the Bishop of Christ was frequently seen fighting under the standard of Mohammed. The Arabs resented this treachery by open and sly covert means, the bribes of the court of Oviedo, were duly paid back among the seditious Christians,

and the warriors of the Prophet joined in the sally and conspired against the safety of the Asturian kings. A vain and wretched policy, which weakened each people, and fed the flame more fiercely, which inwardly consumed the best prospects both of the King of Asturias and of Cordova. The remainder of Abdalrahman's reign was far from happy ; the powers of nature, as well as the arts, seemed conspired to prevent it from closing in prosperity. Two bands of Norman pirates ravaged the shores of Lusitania, and massacring all the inhabitants of either sex, and of every age in the villages, they encamped before Lisbon, where these vile marauders remained, till on the news of an advancing army, they fled with their booty to their ships. Again appearing under the walls

of Seville, they laid its suburbs in ruins, and then fearing the results, decamped in haste from their murderous occupations. The rapidity with which these excursions had been effected was such, that the Norman robber had plundered and departed before the capital was aware of his existence. To remedy so important a defect in his government, Abdalrahman established a number of estafettes or galloping couriers in each town and provincial village, and confided the direction of this useful establishment to one of his sons, and he also in the bays of Cadiz, Carthagen and Tarragona considerably increased his navy, for the more sure protection of the Spanish coasts. The year after a calamitous drought, and a scorching sun destroyed the harvest and the fruits, and dried up

the wells and fountains throughout Spain. Famine compelled numbers of the alarmed people to pass over to Fez, where the abundance which reigned, formed a striking contrast to the surrounding and far spreading desolation. The heart of the King mourned the sufferings of his people, and he hastened to alleviate their distress. His own coffers were opened to supply their wants, he caused the mountain torrents to be diverted from their course, and conveyed in pipes into the city, the fountains of Cordova once more shed abundance around, the vital element was poured into marble reservoirs for the use of man and beast, and the people were kept in full pay and employment, while Abdalrahman received, in the blessings of his grateful subjects, the best recompence

for his wise and liberal conduct. His son Mohammed was declared his successor, and the just and polished Abdalrahman resigned his breath into the hands of God amidst the universal regrets of his people.

Mohammed Ben Abdalrahman evinced a disposition as able as it was willing to continue the policy of his predecessor in the kingdom, and to cherish the liberal arts and sciences of life. Soon after his accession, he was called upon to decide on the merits and justice of religious doctrine. Abon Malek Ben Ans, a native of Medina,* born while the Omiadan Suleiman was Caliph at Damas-

* The four great sects were those of Ben Ans, Hamdani, Nafé, and Ben Omar; they are called "mahmoudah almat bonât," or "approved and followed." Bib. Or. vol. 2, p. 581.

cus, had introduced and confirmed in the East his peculiar forms or tenets on the Prophet's religion, and the Moham-medans divided into four great orthodox sects, all acknowledged the Koran, while they practised its ceremonies according to the expounding of their different doctors.*

The Arabians, and indeed all the east appear ever to have delighted in plunging into the entanglements of nice distinctions and subtle points of a doctrine, and we observe in perusing their history, a long succession of learned Imams and Fakhirs, who constantly engaged their

* For the different doctrines propounded by the four orthodox and two doubtful chiefs of the sects of Islamism, vide *Bibliothèque*, or vol. 2, p. 530 ; *Arb Hamdâni*, vol. 2 ; and *Notices on the Sects*, by Richardson ; also *Specimen Arabum*, Pococke, &c.

attention and obtained their admiration for the various modes in which they explained “ the Book,” and split the religious community of the East into an endless variety of contending sectarians. In the reign of Mohammed, a learned professor Abou Bakir preached in the temples of Cordova, the heterodox suspicions of his mind, as to the purity of the tenets and forms followed in the mosques of Spain, and which were those held by the great sectarian Ben Ans. As might naturally be expected, this invasion on established opinion alarmed the orthodox, and they loudly complained to the King and besought him not to allow the continued propagation of such dangerous doctrines in his capital. In consequence, Mohammed summoned both parties before his tribunal,

each doctrine was laid down and argued, the discernment of Mohammed soon perceived that the *principle* of religion was left untouched in either case, and the judgment he pronounced, in allowing Abou Bakir still to hold forth upon his favourite points, was liberal and sagacious, and (excepting as is always usual on such occasions with the established preachers of the “ Law”) it met the approval of the large majority of the public. The cares of war then engaged his attention, and troops were sent in large bodies into Narbonne and Gallicia. In the former province they committed much devastation, but in the latter the vigorous Ordogno, King of the Asturias, completely defeated the royal forces under Muza Ben Zeid, near the frontiers of the north. The news of this disaster

reached Mohammed's ear, through the organs of envy or calumny. For once, his discernment was obscured and his resentment excited, and in the deposition of Muza from the command, and of his son from the Walisate of Toledo, he committed an act of injustice, which produced fresh misfortunes to his people. These two injured officers concerted and conspired, and the city of Toledo was again in revolt. The father bought peace with Ordogno by the promise of rebellion, and the Christian monarch did not hesitate to send the son money, and men to support him in his attempt. Mohammed advanced on Toledo, by a well imagined stratagem, he drew out the rebels to where his army was lying in ambuscade, and in the valley of Gudalaceta, he defeated them, leaving fifteen thousand dead

upon the field. Nevertheless the city still refused to treat or to submit, the siege continued and the King left its conduct to his youthful son Almondhir, guided by the more mature age and greater experience of his Generals Abdalaziz and Abdalmalek. In the course of the following year Almondhir ravaged the surrounding country, eight hundred of the rebels' heads were hung round the ramparts of Calatrava, the bridges over the river, were thrown down, and the hapless citizens, viewing their houses in ruins, and their smiling land a desert, prayed aloud that these miseries might finish, and that a revolt begun and sustained by the Jews and their bastard adherents, might end in a return to the obedience, order and justice of the King's authority. Mohammed suspected or was informed

of these wishes ; at the head of an imposing force he summoned the citizens of Toledo to surrender, and the rebels having quitted the place in alarm, the inhabitants hastened to open their gates to the army of their sovereign. The fresh incursions of the Norman bands on the coasts of Malaga, were followed up by further advantages obtained against the Arabs by the Asturian Christians, and these even carried their standards as far as Salamanca and Coria.

Hence, however, Almondhir forced them back to their own frontiers, and leading on his victorious army, sat down before Pampluna. His absence re-inspired their hopes and courage, they reappeared in vast bodies, and a series of successful operations was closed by the siege of Lisbon. Alarmed at this vast

success, Mohammed published the Aligned, the results of this proceeding compelled the Christians to retreat, nor did the King rest till their army had entered the town of Compostella in Galicia. At this period he returned to Cordova, happy in the thoughts that he had vanquished his enemies and reduced the rebellion in his own kingdom, at a moment, when on the borders of the Navarre country, rose an enemy whose appearance was as unexpected, as his after life proved formidable. Omar Ben Haffsoun was of a low origin and of a servile trade, which latter he followed with ill success and disgust in his native town of Ronda.*

* Ronda, one of the most beautiful towns in the Upper Algarve; then, and till very lately, famous for its manufacture of Damascus blades and lance

More addicted to a life of pillage than to the labours of industry, he admired and embraced the occupation of a regular bandit, and his acts of ferocity, intrepidity and skill, soon procured him the admiration of the vulgar, and the alliance of the desperate. Of an ambition equal to his recklessness, he got possession of an almost impregnable castle among the mountains, and there defied the officers of justice, and spread terror and discontent around. He then proclaimed open revolt against Mohammed, and so powerful had he become, that when the inhabitants of a town refused to raise his standard, he did not hesitate to avenge himself by pillage, and de-

struction. The Wali of Zaragossa* was discontented with the justice of his sovereign, and by his inactivity in not stopping the progress of Haffsoun, afforded him every facility, while, with more open treachery, the governors of Lerida and many other towns embraced an alliance with the bandit, and gave him every assistance.

The King lost no time in leading his royal legions to suppress this formidable revolt ; but the wily traitor whom he sought to subdue, deceived his sagacity by his apparent submission, and so deeply was Mohammed impressed with

* The same Muza Ben Zaid who had been removed from the command, and who, says Cardonne, but he gives no reason, was, i. e. had been, a Christian !—Tome 1, p. 289. Certainly not a likely person to be appointed to so high a command.

Haffsoun's sincerity in his assertions of friendship and loyalty, that Ben Cassem, his nephew, was ordered to join the rebel forces, with the troops of Valencia, to aid in Haffsoun's meditated attack upon the Christians of Gallicia. The King retired after this with the main body of his army. In the dead of night, Haffsoun entered the camp of his ally Cassem, and slew him with all the Valencian soldiers. At this terrible news, the nobles and people rose in mass, to take an oath of vengeance against such monstrous treachery ; and the prince Almondhir was ordered to advance with a large army, to wash out the insult and murder in the blood of Haffsoun and of his associates. The rebel applied, on this occasion, to his Christian friends ; but the troubles in his own territory prevented Alphonso

from affording him any assistance. Though disappointed of this expected reinforcement, the reckless bandit defied Almondhir and his forces. A bloody and decisive battle covered the field with the dying and the dead ; the retreat to his favourite château was cut off, and Haffsoun sought safety among the snow-clad mountains of the frontier. Almondhir entered the very den of the robbers, where all perished by the sword ; and this great defeat so impressed the rebels with dismay, as to induce the immediate surrender of Lerida and other revolted towns. Haffsoun advised his people to reconcile themselves to the King's authority ; and promising again to reappear among them with reanimated hopes and strong reinforcements, he vanished amidst the caves and rocks of the Pyrenees.

Almondhir returned to Cordova in triumph.

The policy of the Asturians had excited the disgust and vengeance of the King, and he now determined to attack their dominions by a maritime expedition. The fleet of the Arabian admiral directed its course to the Gallician coast ; but a tempest caused the wreck of many of his ships, and the loss of numerous lives. Encouraged by this disaster, the Asturians again invaded the Arab dominions ; and the Navarrese, under their general, Sancho, advancing from the frontier, raised the siege of Pampeluna, and compelled the Mussulmans to intrench themselves within Tudela. Almondhir reappeared at the camp, and repaired these losses ; but a revolt at Saragossa again called for his assistance. The siege of

Toledo followed the suppression of this mutiny : the royal arms gained complete success ; and again the sagacious policy of razing the towers of Toledo was urged, and again rejected by the monarch.

In the meantime, the affairs of the Asturians were acquiring solidity and extension by the alliance of Alphonso with the daughter of Sancho of Navarre ; and the united armies of the two christian states took the field against the Moslems with renewed hopes and vigour. A tremendous battle, on the banks of the Douro, was contested with obstinate valour, and the losses on both sides must have been indeed considerable, since either truth or error has handed down as fact, that eleven days were employed by the christians in the due interment of their dead. The awful visitations of

famine and pestilence suspended, for five years, the hostile operations, if it could not deaden, the insatiable enmity of the two powers in Spain. At the expiration of that term, the siege of Zamora, where Alphonso had established his capital,* was undertaken by Almondhir ; but his efforts were checked by the violent earthquake which shook Spain to her foundations, and equally overawed Mohammedan and Christian (A. D. 881.) The superstitions of his army proved too strong for the representations of Almondhir to have any effect. In vain he argued that this calamity could be no signal

* A town close to the frontier river, the Douro. This shows how entirely the Kings of Asturias were devoting themselves to the invasion of the Arabian territories, and the extension of their own.

sign from heaven, and that it was produced by natural causes, by immutable wisdom : the depression of his army was complete ; and, hopeless of success, and fearful of mutiny, the enlightened prince acceded to their idle alarms, and led them back to Cordova. On the other side, the subjects of Alphonso were again plunged in intrigues and rebellion, and the troubles of his kingdom induced that prince to treat for peace with Mohammed. In consequence, the treaty was ratified ; and in the capital of the Arab, the ambassador from the Asturias was received with honour, and his country recognized as an independent state.

Haffsoun forgot not his promise. He employed his time among the Navarrese, in exciting their avidity, and he was not deceived. Anxious to extend their do-

minion, reckless of the means employed, they readily embraced his offers, and lent him the necessary aid, with which he ravaged the frontiers, and seizing some fortresses in the Pyrenean passes, delivered them into Sancho's hands. But no sooner did Haffsoun learn the treaty which had been entered into with the Gallician monarch, than he at once foresaw and prepared for the coming blow. He summoned all his forces, routed the Walis of Sarragoza and Huesca, and conquered all the country from thence to the banks of the Ebro. Mohammed, Almondhir, and all the great generals of the Arabians, led a vast and energetic army to attempt his final suppression. The great engagement took place among the defiles leading to Navarre. Haffsoun fell mortally wounded ;

the general of the christian Count of Navarre, the associate and ally of a ferocious Moslem bandit, was slain on the field, and the united forces of troops and robbers totally defeated. The King returned to his palace amidst loud cries of joy ; large rewards were distributed to the military, and Almondhir received, amidst their exultation, the rights and title of heir to his father's throne.

The " war of rebellion," though repressed, was not, however, extinguished. Caleb, the son of Haffsoun, descended from his mountain retreat to assume the bloody honours, and continue the lawless trade of his father. Almondhir marched against him, pursued him along the Ebro to the gates of Tortosa, whence he sent on his general, Abdalvahir, to harass the rebels on their retreat. This general fell

into an ambuscade concerted by the Návarese, was taken prisoner, and seriously wounded, was carried into Navarre. Here, however, he appears to have been kindly treated, and on payment of a large ransom, he was again delivered to his soldiers and his country. Thus, the frontiers of Galicia were quieted by the treaty existing between Alphonso and Mohammed. The rebellion of Caleb was (at least for the moment) put down, the Walis of the provinces were faithful, the towns in peace, and Mohammed saw once more the smiles of his subjects amidst the calm serenity which prevailed.

On the evening of a sultry day, the monarch of Cordova enjoyed the refreshing air in the splendid gardens of the Alcazar palace, and the Wali of Jaën, Haschen Ben Abdelaziz, the especial friend

and favourite, was his only companion.

“How happy,” said the Wali, “should be the royal state ; the pleasures of life are all concentrated for, and wait upon, the will of the monarch : enchanting gardens, sumptuous palaces, luxury and power, are the lot of kings on earth.”

“The path of royalty,” replied Mohammed, “appears to the spectator strewn with roses, while the feet of him who treads it bleed from the thorns with which it is interlaid, and when the last hour arrives, the monarch must equally sink and crumble into dust, even as the meanest of his subjects. We hold our lives like all the creatures of Allah, but at his nod ; and to the good, the relinquishment of this world is the commence-

ment of their eternal happiness.”* The hour of rest arrived, the monarch of Spain reposed on his couch to enjoy the dream of a few hours, and slept the sleep of eternity.

[886.] The son of Haffsoun seized this occasion to renew his rebellious enterprizes, and the ease with which the traitor was enabled to take possession of

* The character of this prince, as drawn by Car-donne, is that of a weak and most unfortunate monarch, deceived by his friends and oppressed by his enemies ; and the concluding words of his life are so changed or mutilated, as to be destitute either of point or sublimity. According to him, Ben Abdela-ziz is supposed to have said : “ How happy would be the lot of kings if they could avoid death ! ” to which stupid remark Mohammed replies by one equally so : “ Without it, how should I be here ? If my predecessor had not died, I could not have succeeded to the throne ! ”—Vide tome 1, 187 to 304.

many of the towns in the north, struck the mind of the new monarch with grief and dismay. He, however, resolved to send the favourite of his father, Haschem Ben Abdelaziz, against Caleb. The latter attempted to repeat the artifices which had been so successfully practised by his father, but Almondhir wrote to Haschem reminding him of this, and bidding him be on his guard against all such attempts. Whether that general disregarded these injunctions, or whether in the hope of promoting the general peace, and saving a useless effusion of blood, he was induced to consent that a number of mules should be sent into Toledo to transport the baggage and the wounded of Caleb's people into the retreat named by the latter among the Pyrenees, the rebel

promising, if this were done, to surrender up the city and depart in peace. The conventions were seemingly observed; the troops of Almondhir entered the town, his authority was proclaimed, and Haschem joyfully announced these tidings to the King, recommending him, at the same time, to disband the troops which had been levied for this war. The glad monarch cheerfully complied, and the general returned to Cordova, where he was followed by a courier, bearing news that a concealed band of Caleb Ben Haffsoun's had remained in Toledo, that they had again seized on the fort and towers, and massacred the royal forces left there by Haschem. The enraged Almondhir instantly summoned Ben Addelaziz to his presence; the fury of disappoint-

ment knew no bounds, and the execution of a faithful friend, an able councillor, and an old favourite of his father produced a shock on the feelings of the people, which alienated their affections and diminished their respect. Motives for so strange an action, for so despotic an act, have been imputed to feelings of a private nature ; but if so*, they still more disgrace the memory of Almoudhir. Whatever might be the cause, the King's hatred extended to the children of his general, since he ordered them to be imprisoned, and their estates confiscated and sold. He then proceeded in person to Toledo. One

* From the excessive love he bore his father Mohammed, and from the long and bitter regrets the Wali expressed at his loss. As well he might.—Vide Conde, tome 1er.

whole year was employed in attempting to bring on an action with the wary Caleb ; at length the armies met. In an impetuous charge, Almondhir lost his life, and the false alarm of Caleb's death may alone have prevented the entire destruction of the royal legions.

[A.D. 889.] To the people, the death of Almondhir was not matter of much regret, his life was little known to them, and the cruel act by which the venerable Wali of Jaën had been deprived of honour and of life had gone far to destroy whatever little esteem they might otherwise have possessed. With the army it was different ; the valour he had always displayed, the sufferings he had shared in, the exploits he had performed, and the many victories which he had won, had rendered him, in their eyes, a hero, and

the memory of Almondhir was cherished, and his death long regretted by the soldier and the captain of the Andalusian provinces.

Abdallah, the brother of Almondhir, was elected by the council at Cordova to succeed. His first act was to restore liberty to the sons of Haschem; to the former, Omar, he gave his father's Walisate of Jaën, to the latter, Ahmed, a captaincy in the royal guards. This just and humane act was highly applauded, and the people looked up to the new King with every assurance of a just and happy reign. The affairs of Toledo were pressing, but the troubles of Seville detained Abdallah from the siege. His son, Mohammed, Wali of that town, had entered into an alliance with his uncles, the Walis of Xeres of Sidonia, to wage

an unnatural war against the new Wali of Jaën, whom it is said, the prince detested from motives of private pique*. Shocked at his conduct, and still more grieved to perceive it was encouraged by his own brothers, Abdallah sent his second son Almudafar to Seville to employ the means of reason and persuasion with the turbulent young prince. In the mean time, the King arrived at his camp before Toledo, and pushed on the preparations for the siege. Little advantage was, however, gained by his presence, and a letter from Almudafar, containing the alarming intelligence of a serious rebellion, contemplated by the prince Mohammed, caused the King instantly to return to Cordova.

* That he had been the means of crossing him in fits and courses of gallantry among women.—Conde, *oc. cit.* and *Bib. Arab. Hisp.*, tome 1.

This rebellious Wali had allied himself to one Suâr Ben Hamadani, a brigand of the southern mountains, who had excited all the people to insurrection in the province of Jaën, had collected ten thousand of the lawless under his standard, had seized many of the forts among the Alpuxarras, and was robbing and murdering the defenceless villagers. To this chieftain, Caleb had also sent his messenger, and proposed a treaty, by which he secured to him the aid of one Suquelah, Sheik of a wandering tribe in the African desert. Suâr having accepted this offer, these two rebels united their forces, beat the royal troops, and took their commander prisoner, who was conducted to the fortress of Garnathah or Grenada, then newly erected among the southern range of hills. Alarmed at their success,

the cities of Jaën, Huesca, and others opened their gates, and all the district from hence to Calatrava was, for the time, reduced by the arms of the allied rebels. The King, however, at length met them, and in a long-contested struggle, overthrew their bands, slew vast numbers, among which were the chiefs Suâr and Suquelah, and regained possession of Jaën and Lorja. Two new commanders were found for the rebels, the former hazarded and lost a battle and his life, the other less rash, led back among the mountains of Grenada the remnant of his shattered bands, while the King returned to Cordova to watch more nearly the tumults of Seville and the siege of Toledo. In the former affair, Almudafar had hitherto had so small a force under his command, that he could not do more

than prevent the rebellion from extending further. But as at this time the war which had broken out in Lusitania had been terminated by the victories of the general Obeidalla, the King sent that brave commander with a large body of men to join Almudafar, who now took the offensive, and soon after the two brothers were engaged in the battle of Hermanos. Almudafar was triumphant, Mohammed was taken prisoner and strictly guarded till the King's pleasure should be known. Before this could take place, Mohammed died, and Abdallah was accused of having caused an event which the nature and the number of his son's wounds in the battle were alone sufficient to have produced. Mohammed left one son of four years old, for whose tender age the people enter

tained, or affected to feel, the greatest care and compassion. He was sent to Cordova, where, under the inspection of his grandfather, Abdalrahman Ben Mohammed Ben Abdalla, received a lavish education, and was carefully prepared to fulfil the glorious destiny which awaited him. In the mean time, several years rolled on and still Toledo was besieged, and Caleb kept possession of the town.

This rebel became more ambitious, and trusted that, owing to the existing treaty between Zamora and Cordova, the Gallician frontiers would be left exposed to any sudden attack. He, therefore, sent upwards of 40,000 men to the neighbourhood of Zamora. Not only did the officers of Abdallah, near the Douro and frontiers, send to Cordova news of this expedition, but faithful to

the spirit of the treaty, they apprised Alphonso of his danger. That King instantly assembled a numerous force, with which he kept the rebels in check for three days, and on the fourth day he gave them battle, when they were totally defeated, and their scattered bands, flying in all directions, spread terror throughout the surrounding country. The zeal of certain fanatics among the Mussulmans was fired at this effusion of blood by the swords of their Christian foes, and they even carried their misplaced enthusiasm so far as to recommend Abdallah entering into a treaty with Caleb, and making common cause against the Asturians. These suggestions the King wisely treated with disdain, and sent word to Alphonso to push his forces on with vigour against Caleb ; while he would

attack them on his side with the legions of Andalousia. The ambassador charged with these despatches was the famous general of the Lusitanian war, Obeidallah. No sooner, however, did the religious fanatics learn what had happened, than they attempted, even in Cordova, to raise an outcry against Abdallah, treating him as an infidel, and in many temples, the Khetabs were sufficiently audacious to omit the Khotbah, while some even went as far as to pronounce it for Moctader, the Caliph of the East.*

These seditious movements were encouraged by Alcassim, brother to the King, and rose to that height that the royal Commissioner and Fakhir Abdalvahid was sent to investigate the case,

* Cardonne, tome 1, p. 308. Casiri, tome 1, 234.

and on his report, the prince was arrested, and with many of the Fakhirs and seditious preachers banished from the country. Caleb and his party trusted, that by assiduously fomenting these discontents, they might soon lead to an insurrection in Cordova, and that intrepid chief ventured in person, to explore in that capital, and to attempt to raise the citizens against the royal authority. A report of his presence, however, quickly spread, many were arrested and interrogated on the subject ; these either were, or pretended to be ignorant, and the rebel saved his head by a timely flight from his dangerous and fool-hardy expedition.

On his return to his bands, Caleb recommenced his usual course of pillage and devastation. But near Calatrava,

Obeidallah encountered him, and so signal was the defeat, that the bandit was contented to remain for three whole years within the walls of Toledo.

The conqueror of Lusitania, and of Jaën, the chastiser of the rebels, and the faithful councillor of Abdallah might reasonably expect some reward for services so long and so ably rendered. In Merida, of which he was Wali, his government had been so judicious as to secure the peace of that province, and the esteem of all its inhabitants. Yet this government was desired by Almudafar for himself, and he suggested to Abdallah the age of Obeidallah as a reason for his retirement; but the King nobly refused to lend himself to this unworthy and ungrateful proceeding. Obeidallah was, however, no sooner informed of

it, than he wrote to his sovereign and resigned an office, for which he pretended his advanced age might render him somewhat unfitted. The King reluctantly consented, and Obeidallah exchanged his Walisate to be the captain-general, Emir, of the Slavonian body-guards. Here, he had frequent opportunities of exercising a well-dissembled revenge against Almudafar, and he laid a plan to deprive that prince of the throne, which, in the end, proved entirely successful. He openly espoused the cause of the youthful Abdalrahman, who had, from his earliest youth, been the popular favourite, and who now, from a combination of numerous mental and physical perfections, enlisted the good wishes of all classes in his favour.

So accomplished was this prince that,

for learning, many even of maturer age excelled him not ; conversant with the Koran, and with the religious traditions or Sonnah of his country, and a deep proficient in the Arabic language and poetry, he was admired by the priesthood, and esteemed by the learned : while his activity, grace, and skill employed and displayed in the management of the horse, the bow, and the javelin, won him golden opinions from the vulgar. With his grandfather he was a special favourite, and Obeidallah lost no opportunity to push the cause of his protégé, and to secure his election to the crown. Abdallah, at length, urged on by his representations, and predisposed by his own feelings, consented to nominate his grandchild. The council of Wazirs assembled and confirmed the

choice, and after recommending his youth, his virtues, and his fortunes to the doubtful love and care of Almudafar, Abdallah expired in the twenty-fourth year of his reign*.

[A.D. 912.] Abdallah descended to the grave with the character of a wise and courageous King. A greater lover of peace than of war, he sustained misfor-

* Mr. Cardonne makes Abdallah to die of grief, owing to eternal dissensions at home, and defeat from his enemies. He then observes, that the crown of Cordova was hereditary ; and, with the same accuracy makes out Abdalrahman III., grandson of Abdallah, to be his nephew, and son of Mohammed, or Muhammed, his brother ! But what brother ? The rebellion of the son of Abdallah, his death in prison, and the early years of Abdalrahman, the injustice of Almudafar, and the dignified vengeance of Obeidallah, are all suppressed or forgotten in the pages of Mr. Cardonne.—Vid. tom 1, p. 306 to 310.

tune with calmness, and enjoyed prosperity with humility. Faithful to his friends and his foes, whether Arab or Christian, he reigned with justice and temperance ; the esteem of his subjects accompanied him through life, and their regrets, at his death, proved they were not unaware of the loss they had sustained.

His virtues were long remembered, but his reign was eclipsed, and his qualities obscured, by the greater fortune and transcendant splendour of his illustrious successor.

CHAPTER IV.

Abdalrahman III.—Conquests—Capture of Toledo—Expedition to Fez—The Azhara—The doctrine of Hamim—Declaration of war with the Asturians—Conspiracy of Abdallah—Attack of Tunis—Death of Abdalrahman.

ABDALRAHMAN III, mounted on the throne, received from his subjects the title of Amir Al Mumenin, or Defender of the Faithful. His reign opened a new era to the Andalousian people. Brilliant conquests over his enemies, suppression of intestine revolt, extension of empire, foreign alliances, and a vast progress in literature, arts, and science combined the body of occupations destined to fill up his time and cares, and to il-

lustrate the annals of his country during the considerable period of half a century.

On his accession to the throne, the states of Asturias and Gallicia were at peace with the 'Arabians. The banks of the Douro were no longer visited by their troops, the province of Lusitania was no more startled by the appearance of their standards. The troubles of disputed succession prevented the recurrence of war, nor was it till the death of Garcia that these terminated, and that Ordogno, then left the sole sovereign, fixed his capital at Leon,* and designated himself by the title of King of Leon and Asturias.

The virtues of Almudafar had been strong enough to quench the risings of

* Mariana, Lib. vii.

ambition in his breast, and to allow the promptings of a generous nature to take full effect. Though disinherited, as it were, by his father, he took the oath of allegiance to his successor with zeal and sincerity, and if he felt, he never appears to have displayed, on this point, any symptoms of resentment against Obeidallah. Aided by these able councillors and sincere friends, the young and handsome monarch left Cordova to prosecute a war of extermination, against Caleb, and to suppress rebellion throughout his kingdom. The power and success of the son of Haffsoun had indeed been immense. From Tortosa to Murcia on the east, and from the frontiers of Catalonia to the heart of the seditious Toledo*; his bravery and his bribes had

* The spirit of the Toledan people was eminently

enslaved and corrupted the whole population ; and the King of Cordova might well feel alarmed at results, which, while they shocked his pride, menaced the existence of his empire. A large army was convoked, and, at the head of 12,000 men, filled with enthusiasm for their king, and shame at the deeds and du-

addicted to rebellion ; for two hundred years it was the general focus for the discontented. This remark is confirmed by Cardonne, tom 1, p. 298, but who oddly enough applies the same observation, and in *exactly the same words* to the people of Seville !—Vid. tom 1, p. 200. The abundance of Jews, and the neighbourhood of the Christian frontiers, were doubtless reasons for the frequency and duration of the revolts of Toledo. It was also to be remarked, Toledo had been, in former days, the Gothic capital, the residence since then of many factions, men such as the Samails, &c., and the refuge of the exiles of Cordova. —Vid. d'Anville, vol. 2, p. 183.

ration of the ferocious chieftain's reign, Abdalrahman, Almudafar, and Obeidallah, advanced upon Toledo.

While Ben Haffsoun sought fresh succours among the towns of Valencia, the King laid siege to Toledo ; and then fearing to give time to the rebel, he advanced with the greater part of his army towards Cuença. Near that city a tremendous conflict took place, in which the victory of Abdalrahman was only rendered incomplete by the escape of Caleb, but the results were most important, since all the provinces of the eastern Spain submitted immediately to the royal authority. Returning to his capital, the King then turned his arms towards the Alpuxarras, where he everywhere reaped conquest, and where the principal cities of Jaen, Loja, and others,

which had long held out, again embraced, with a feeling allied to gratitude, the authority of the King. Wherever he appeared, his sagacious measures, his person, and his manners, gained him adherents and friends, and it was only necessary to have the presence of Abdalrahman before a town or fort, to be assured of an easy surrender. With little or no effusion of blood, the King re-established his authority amidst the southern provinces ; and gratified at the mode and the extent of his success, he was received at Cordova amidst the acclamations of the people.

The pirates of the Barbary tribes of Zanhag and Masmouûd had infested the shores of Sicily and Calabria, and now menaced the Andalousian coast. To pre-

vent or repress this evil, the grand admiral Okail was ordered to transport troops to Majorca, and new vessels were laid down in the arsenals of Tarragona and Algeziras. The urgent entreaties of his uncle, who was still in the camp before Toledo, determined Abdalrahman to take the most energetic measures against Caleb and his allies; and in the following spring, after a brilliant progress through Lorca, Valencia, Murcia, and Tortosa, he reached the banks of the Ebro at the head of an enormous army. Hence, he proceeded to Zaragossa, into which place he gained an easy entrance; and in the Alcazar of that city, he passed many months, confirming, by his presence, the efforts of the loyal, and suppressing the attempts of the factious,

while the climate and beauty of the surrounding country attracted his admiration and praise.

The son of Haffsoun foresaw, and reluctantly admitted the decline of his influence, and sent two envoys to the King to agree to a treaty of peace, on the condition that he should be allowed to retain the provinces of the east for himself, and his descendants. To this insolent and ill-timed proposal, the King answered with becoming dignity, refusing to treat, but as a monarch to his subject, threatening the rebel with his utmost vengeance if, within a month, he did not submit, and lay down his arms. Driven to despair, Caleb sought everywhere to raise the courage of his followers, and to gain fresh adherents to his cause. But

his attempts were vain ; the King of Leon was prevented by domestic troubles, from affording any aid to this worthy ally, and Ben Haffsoun, thus reduced to the Mus-sulmans for his sole support, found them dispirited by late defeats, and unwilling longer to contend against the power and popularity of Abdalrahman. In the southern mountains the last embers of lingering sedition were inflamed by the severities of a collector of the imposts, but the vigorous activity of the King, tempered with mildness, silenced all complaints, and Elvira, Álhama, and other fortresses of the Alpuxarras, again submitted to his sway.

Leaving Almudafar at the camp, the monarch returned to Cordova, where the news of Caleb's death, which happened

at Huesca,* considerably eased Abdalrahman's apprehensions as to the further duration of the rebellion. For three years the tactics of war, guided by the prudence of Almudafar, laid waste the country round Toledo. The obstinacy of its citizens was, at length, reduced by their despair; and, famished and dismayed, they opened the gates of that city, where, after an absence of fifty-six years,† the standard of Cordova floated

* Whether this was Huesca, the ancient Osca, in the north, and not far from the Navarre frontier, or whether the more modern Huesca, near Jaen and the Alpuxarras mountains, the Arab historians do not say.

† The rebellion of Haffsoun began in 883 or 884. The surrender of Toledo took place in 926 or 927.—Vide Conde, vol. i, Casiri, tom. i.

from the walls, and the khotbah was once more heard in the temples.

Nevertheless, Giaffar, the son of Caleb, sought means to continue the war of rebellion. In Leon, Ramiro the Second had succeeded to Ordone. Young and ambitious, this prince aspired to vast conquests ; and he readily listened and assented to Giaffar's proposals of an alliance. With a considerable army, he entered the kingdom of Spain, laid waste the Douro, seized and pillaged Talavera, and burnt numerous villages. The Wali of Toledo, Ahmed, set forward to check and chase back the invader ; he forced them to retreat beyond their frontier river, but his force was too weak to attempt pursuit, and he was contented to remain on its banks, in order to watch

and prevent any return on the part of Ramiro.

From the gorges of the Pyrenees,* Almodafar learnt the insult offered by the Asturians and the disgraces to the Arab arms. Burning for revenge, he hastily marched his army to the Douro, where he was reinforced by fresh legions from Cordova; and with these troops he entered Gallicia, and paid back Ramiro by the most cruel scenes of devastation. On this occasion, the sword was unsparingly used, the prisoners, taken in different combats, cruelly massacred, and the resistance offered by Ramiro utterly vain;—and that sagacious monarch reaped the advantage of having destroyed Talavera

* Whither he had pursued the rebels after the christians in Gallicia.

at the expense of one-third of his army, 20,000 christian captives, and the devastation of lands, villages, and towns throughout a large tract of his dominions. His vengeance was spent on some hapless victims of his own family, and the savage amused himself by enjoying tyranny at home, in the absence of success against his enemies.

The arms of Abdalrahman were now victorious throughout Spain, and his alliance had been courted by the Greeks of Constantinople and the Franks of Aix-la-Chapelle. A call was now made for his assistance, which, while it opened a fresh field for extending his ambition and influence, afforded him the means of repaying the services of old and faithful friends. The tribe of Zaneta called for his interference in the kingdom of Fez or Morocco.

For upwards of a century, the Edrissah family* had reigned in Fez, which had owed its subsequent existence to their valour and policy, and now the eighth King of that race, Yahik, had been obliged to humble himself before the Fatimite Emir Obeidalla. After this disgrace, a neighbouring chieftain, called Al-Affah, had marched against Yahik, and entering Fez, proclaimed himself as sovereign. The Zannites, ashamed of the weakness of Yahik, and jealous of the power of Al-Affah, felt all the desire of revenge, without the means of gratifying it, till their chieftains wrote to Cordova, explaining the circumstances, and recalling to the mind of Abdalrahman the long and steady friendship which had existed be-

* Vide Bib. Or. vol. i, p. 384.624-626.

tween the *families* of Zaneta and Om-miah.

Their appeal was not in vain. Abdalrahman sent both land and sea forces : his troops shortly occupied Tangiers and Ceuta ; and Al-Affah, respecting the name or dreading the power of the Caliph of Spain, proclaimed him Emir and Imam in the palaces and mosques of Fez. But the pride of the King was soon checked by the eternal revolts and murders in his new states, while his bad policy was evidently proved in the news that the Gallicians, profiting by the absence of the best troops and commanders in Africa, had ravaged Lusitania and attempted to besiege Badajoz and Lisbon. The conquest of Fez might, at the moment, gratify the ambition of Abdalrahman and the pride of his subjects ; but it was

purchased at the price of domestic stability, and a happy opportunity for cementing their power at home, and effectually undermining the kingdoms of the Asturias was for ever lost to the Spanish Arabs.

To revenge the Lusitanians, Almudafar headed the battalion of Merida, and beat back the christians to their frontier, while further advantages were impossible, from the want of men and generals, then employed in the ostentatious but useless display of power in Africa. For two years, however, Ramiro remained without the reach of the Mohammedan arms, and peace, *de facto*, reigned between Leon and Cordova.

For a moment, then, let it be allowed to turn away from the fierce monotony of these annals, to contemplate some of

their many alleviating characters, in considering a work of elegant magnificence, which the great riches and splendid taste of Abdalrahman erected in the neighbourhood of Cordova.

About five to ten miles to the south of Cordova, and on the banks of the sparkling Guadalquivir, where once stood a favourite summer house of the Arabian kings, the foundations of the “Azhara” palace had been laid. This name* was in honour to a loved sultana of the king ; and he spared no pains, time, or expense to make the edifice the marvel of the age. During the progress of the works, an elegant town gradually encircled the ample gardens, and received the name of

* Azhara signifies “a beauteous flower, or pearl.”
—Vide Bib. Or. vol. i, p. 303.

Medina Azhara. In the midst of its spacious street rose a smaller imitation of the great mosque in the capital, and near to these holy precincts Abdalrahman constructed the useful but important building of a royal mint. For the erection and ornament of his palace, architects and artists had been invited from Constantinople and all the East. Its vaults were sustained by four thousand pillars of sculptured stone ; its marble floors were covered with the brilliant mosaic of the East, and the walls were encrusted with the same material. The wood-work was painted in gold and blue, and the beams and rafters were solid blocks of cedar and mahogany. Fifteen hundred columns of polished marble, hewn from the quarries of Spain, Africa, Greece, and Italy, supported the great apartments of state.

The superb hall of audience was encrusted with massy gold, decorated with pearls, and surrounded with curious figures of birds and animals, sculptured with the nicest care ; and from the golden ceiling hung the famous pearl, which had been sent as a present from Leo, the Greek emperor at Constantinople. In the private rooms, and in the luxurious harem* were various fountains of marble, which poured out their limpid waters into basons of smooth jasper ; and in the middle of the largest of these, appeared an immense swan, of solid gold, which had been moulded in the workshops of

* “ Chose défendue par la loi,” applied to the Imam’s sanctum, the tomb of the Prophet, and the apartments of women.—Bib. Or. vol. ii, p. 200, and Richardson, 7th Dissert.

the East for this express purpose. The large and rich gardens were filled with the choicest fruit trees, rare flowers, and aromatic plants; while the acacia and myrtle offered shade from the rays of a cloudless sun. In the middle of the gardens stood a pavilion or summer house, of pure white marble, whose silver polish was reflected back, with tenfold lustre, from a glittering stream of quicksilver, running from the great fountain. In the surrounding walks and alleys were placed various highly worked jasper and marble reservoirs of refreshing water; and the interior of the palace was adorned with elegant baths, and furnished with the richest silks, brocades, and cloth of gold from the looms of Spain and Constantinople.

In this abode of Eastern magnificence

and luxury, the third Abdalrahman took up his residence. Here, at a later date, the christian embassy, from the banks of the Bosphorus, was sumptuously entertained ; although, before that period arrived, its walls had been tainted by a domestic tragedy, which embittered the days of its superb and voluptuous master.

The sparks of religious contention had been kindled in Cordova, by the appearance of a new sectarian, by name Hamim, who, after preaching, with some success, his peculiar tenets in the plains of Africa, arrived in Spain, to add fresh converts to his doctrine. The alterations which he proposed appear to have been trifling, and purely fanatic ; but there were two points which struck the government as worthy of serious attention :

the one was, his desiring the prayers of his congregation for himself and a favourite wife—the other, the exaction of one-tenth from the revenues of his proselytes. The *doctrine* of Hamim offended the priesthood, his *practice* alarmed the government. He was consequently arrested, and when the Fakhirs adjudged his doctrine to damnation, and his person to death, the execution of the latter quickly followed on the sentence.

Lusitania was again alarmed by rumours of war from Leon ; and so great was the terror of the peasantry of the Douro, and those frontiers, that they deserted their tillage and farms, and transported themselves even as far as the Tagus and Lisbon. War was soon declared. Abdalrahman fixed upon Salamanca as the head-quarters of the army,

and despatched orders to all Walis and Emirs throughout the kingdom to hold themselves in readiness to assemble there. His commands were universally respected, and the whole army, which in the ensuing spring, reunited its force under the command of the King, the sagacious Almu-dafar, and the ancient Obeidallah, numbered 120,000 veteran soldiers, used to the battle field, ardent for victory, and enthusiastic for their monarch's and their country's renown. With such elements, the Arab sovereigns might have marched, with assured success, from the rock of Tarik to the borders of the Rhine ; but so few were the occasions when this happy combination was presented, that the power of the Mussulmans was comparatively of small extent and of unequal duration. The siege of Zamora was the

first enterprize of the combined forces, and was directed by the skill of Abdalla, the Wali of Badajoz ; while the King and Almudafar, after a little time, leaving 20,000 men before Zamora, advanced towards the Elsa, a small stream,* tributary to the Douro, where they met the brilliant army and the mail-clad knights of Leon and the Asturias. Ramiro, their King, and the Count of Castile, led the Christian armament.

The battle was long and bloody, fortune for some time seemed undecided, till the enthusiasm and the shock of the

* The Elsa is a small stream flowing into the Douro, to the N.W. of Zamora ; it takes its rise in the eastern mountains of the Asturias, and from its source to its terminus runs through an extent of about sixty miles English.—Pinkerton's Geog. Map. Spain, and p. 182.

Arab cavalry carried the day, the Elsa was tinged with the red blood of the combatants and the dead lay piled upon the field.

The Asturians retreated, and the Arabians returned to Zamora, took that city by assault, where, while their vengeance slew all the one sex, their humane gallantry spared and protected the other.

After this combat called "Alhandik" or fight of the rampart, the King ordered all the fortifications to be repaired, and came back to Cordova, where large rewards recompensed the services and fatigues of his soldiers. A further invasion of Ramiro was again repelled by a contest in which, after immense slaughter on both sides, the Chateau of San Stefano or Etienne was taken by the royal forces.

The rebellion of one Abn Yahac, was at the same time quelled, and the names of Giaffar and Haffsoun are heard no more.* The King of Leon, exhausted by his long struggles and weary of his bad success, desired and demanded a peace, and on his side, Abdalrahman equally suffering from a fierce war, and a long extended rebellion readily consented ; a treaty for five years was consequently

* For sixty years rebellion had been fomenting and exploding in Toledo. Its vicinity to the Christian frontier, its large population, upwards in the Arabian times of 100,000 souls and composed of mixed subjects, deserters from Christianity, and the Jews, its impregnable forts, all were causes for its long and frequent rebellion. The dynasty of rebels, the Haffsoun family were, by their acts, more injurious to the power of the Arabian monarchs than the armies or the fleets of their foreign enemies.

agreed upon by the King and the Asturian ambassadors at Cordova.

In this interim the African possessions needed the further attention of the government. The reverses which the Spanish arms had met with, had been somewhat redeemed by the death of Al Affah, and the greater part of the Fezzan state was again under Abdalrahman's control.

For the continuance, however, of this power, his vanity led him to draw men, ships and treasures from Spain, and the empty shadow of a title, and the assumption of an ill-founded and unstable authority in Africa, weakened the country and exhausted the resources of the Andalousian state.

The public policy of an eminent monarch is always recorded in the page of history, while the actions of his

more private life are seldom mentioned, and thus, while we may sometimes form a pretty accurate judgment of the king, we remain in ignorance on the character of the man.

From time to time, however, events occur which history lays open to our view, and the following will detail a scene of private calamity, and stern domestic justice which assail the proudest, and to all appearance, the most prosperous of the race of man. The King of Cordova had two sons, Abdalla and Hakim, of whom the latter had received the title of Al-Hadi. This was received by Abdalla in the light of an unfair partiality, and the rising discontent of the young prince was observed and carefully fostered by certain ambitious and designing nobles of the city.

Adhilbar, the intimate friend of the prince, was one of this party, and was the chief cause of his subsequent conduct. The intelligence of Adhilbar was great, his virtues various, but his misguided ambition obscured the one and tarnished the other. From him the weak Abdalla received suggestions of his ill-treatment, and was excited to feel anger at what he was taught to consider the injustice of Abdalrahman and the duplicity of Hakim.

He lent himself therefore to treasonable practices, and went so far either by himself or his agents, as to attempt the corruption of the Wazirs and the officers of the royal guards. To what extent this might have gone and to what result it might have led, can never be known since the secret of the conspiracy was revealed by a faithful servant to the

King, whose heart received a wound at his son's ingratitude, from which it is said he never recovered. Urged at the end of a long conference by his uncle Almudafar to the most firm and terrible measures, Abdalrahman reluctantly ordered his arrest, the astounded Abdalla was surrounded by the royal guard in the Mervan palace at Cordova, and brought with his guilty associates to Medina Azhara. On his appearance, the monarch sternly asked him whether it was true that he complained he was not King ; Abdalla, by his silent confusion, confessed his guilt.

The execution of Abhilbar, on whom the prince did not hesitate to throw all the blame, was determined on ; but ere the appointed day arrived, his despair had put an end to his existence. Al-Hakim

interceded for his brother in vain, Abdalrahman replied, that had he been but a private individual, Abdalla's life was safe, but that as King, he could not accede, and though he owned his days would be for ever embittered, and his future hours for ever darkened by the deed, yet public justice exacted from the impartiality of Abdalrahman the execution of Abdalla. The lovely palace of Azhara was that same night the scene of death, and the sobs of the stifled Abdalla expired amidst its stately halls.

Not long after this sad event, the ambassadors from Constantinople arrived, and the Hageb, after sumptuously entertaining them in the capital, led them, on an appointed day, to the superb residence of Azhara.* In the magnificence of his

* Cardonne, tom. 1, p. 324, makes Abdalrahman

royal state, Abdalrahman vied and equalled the splendour of Bagdad.* Amidst the enchanting gardens of the palace, he received the Emperor's envoys ; the rich and numerous body-guard of the Sclavonian regiments filled the space between the entrance and the hall of audi-

receive this embassy at Cordova, and details his magnificence as having been displayed in that capital ; but as Abdalrahman wished to impress the minds of the Greeks with his power and riches, it seems more consistent that he should have entertained them first in his capital, and then have burst upon them in all the blaze of his pomp in the surprising palace of the Azhara.

* Vide d'Herbelot, *Bibl. Or.*, vol. 2, p. 632, and Aboulfeda *Narrative*, French Trans., p. 248, for the glories of the Caliph, who enjoyed the large surface of the Tigris to display his vessels and boats on, an advantage in which the smaller river, at his rival's palace, was deficient.

ence ; and the Grecian ministers were struck with astonishment at the blaze of oriental splendour, taste, and power which surrounded the caliph of Cordova. A treaty of mutual aid and alliance, against the caliphs of Bagdad, was gravely proposed and accepted, and the ambassadors were dismissed from the royal presence with rich presents and fair promises.* The despatches from Africa

* Considering that the Greek empire was daily wasting, and yielding submissively to the encroachments of the Abbassides, and other chieftains of the East, and that Abdalrahman was prevented, by his geographical position, and by the numerous wars and rebellions, both in Africa and Spain, from being, in any way able to annoy or invade the power of Bagdad, this treaty must have been, in reality, a mere form. The valour and union of the Greeks had passed away, and they could no longer protect them-

caused also much pleasure to the King. He had been proclaimed at Fez and at Tahart, and Muhammed Ben Elkar, of the faithful tribe of the Zanites, preserved the Waliship of Fez in the name and authority of that family to whom, in the hour of danger and adversity, his tribe had rendered such eminent services.

At the expiration of the five years, Ramiro was once more sufficiently reinforced to invade Lusitania, and to penetrate by Zamora into the province of Toledo. On this news, Abdalrahman published the Alighed, and the chosen troops flocked from all parts of the kingdom as well as from Africa. The successor* in command of the army was selves; their vanity still remained, it was all, as a nation, which they yet possessed.

*Almudafar had expired in Cordova, soon after the

Ahmed Ben Zaid, who possessed and deserved the confidence of the King. He drove back the christians, ravaged the province and towns of Gallicia; and in the magnificence of his present to Abdalrahman, proved the enormous riches of his plunder.*

execution of the prince Abdalla, not so much in favour, during his latter years, with the people, who attributed to him, and perhaps justly, the death of the King's son. The wise and faithful Obeidallah had died a few years before, having to the last preserved his sincere and amiable character.—Ebnshon, MSS. of Toledo, and Conde, vol. i, 343.

* After deducting the legal tithe of one-fifth of spoils taken from the enemies, for the King's treasury, Ahmed's present consisted of 400 lbs. of virgin gold, worth then, at 8sh. the mechtal, £116,000, 420,000 sequins in silver, worth £142,600; 400lbs. of aloes, 500 ounces of amber, 300 ounces of camphor, thirty pieces of gold cloth and silks, 110 furs of Khorassan,

The following year was again remarkable for the ravages of nature, which, in the shapes of storms and floods, appalled

forty-eight horse coverings of gold and silk tissue from Bagdad, 4,000lbs. of spun silk, thirty Persian carpets, 800 steel or iron mail plates for the war horses, 1000 shields, 100,000 arrows, fifteen Arabian steeds, with gold trappings, 100 African and Spanish mares, twenty saddle mules, forty slaves, and twenty young beauties, splendidly dressed, to which the gallant premier, for such was Ahmed, added a short poem, in which he praised, with some justice and more flattery, the virtues and renown of his sovereign. Vide Bib. Or. Casiri, Conde, Cardonne, Toledo MSS. Cardonne makes this present to come from one Abdoulmalek Ben Zahia, who he says was raised to the rank of prime Wazir on the occasion, and says nothing of its being spoil. The latter was brother to Ahmed, and the names are, with a little variation, the same. The facts differ and are important.—Vide tome i, p. 320.

the hearts of both Spaniard and African. These disasters were succeeded by fresh successes against the troops of Leon, and by the extension of conquest in the plains of Almagreb, in Africa. About this period, also, a conflict took place between a vessel belonging to the Spanish King, which was carrying merchandize from Spain to Egypt and Syria, and a ship belonging to the Emir of Tunis, which opened the way to a long series of warlike operations, alike calamitous and useless. The victory, on this occasion, of the Andalousian sailors excited the fury of the African governor, who made instant and serious reprisals ; and in the port of Almeria, he fought and got possession of a vessel just arrived with some young Greeks, destined to enrich the vocal orchestra of Abdalrahman.

Ahmed Ben Zaid offered the monarch to repair the loss, and revenge the insult. He departed from Spain, collected or increased his forces in Tangiers and Almagreb, and led the delighted Zanite and the eager Andalouz to the gates of the rich Tunis. Attacked both by sea and land, the obstinate defence which its citizens offered was of little avail; and though not taken and sacked, yet the enormous tribute which was exacted by the Spanish Hageb, for raising the siege and withdrawing his army, was so great, as to impoverish the town for many years. The insult to the King was thus amply avenged, and the services of Ahmed appear to have been richly recompensed;* but the results of this ex-

* The King bestowed on him a pension of 100,000

pedition were disastrous. The Soldan of Egypt vowed vengeance against the Andalousians, and overthrew their power in Africa to accomplish it.

The internal troubles of the kingdom of Leon prevented any renewal of war upon the frontier. Sixteen years before this period, (A. D. 950) Ramiro had expired, and left a disputed succession to his children, Ordono and Sancho. The short reign of the former was employed in repressing the tumults caused by the

dinars of gold, which, at the weight of one mechtal of Arabia, was of the value of ten francs each dinar ; hence the whole sum was equal to £40,000 per annum, which added to the other revenues of the Hageb and the spoils of the Emir, must have raised the rental of Ahmed to much above the average fortunes of the richest men of the present age.—Vide Bib. Or. vol. i, p. 605.

latter, and when he died, he left his crown to his son, Bermudus. Against this infant prince the standard of revolt was raised in favour of Sancho, who was the nephew of the King of Navarre ; but his election as King of Leon was speedily put an end to, and his party being defeated, Sancho fled to his uncle, in Navarre, where a serious malady attacked and endangered his life. Report had justly vaunted the skill of the physicians of Cordova, and the polite and generous Abdalrahman received, as a guest in his capital, one of the most inveterate enemies of his faith and power.* The

* Mariana, lib. 8. c. 7. tom. 1. Conde, vol. i. c. 21. Cardonne, in his history of Abdalrahman, makes no mention of this circumstance ; and indeed his whole account is so much at variance with the authors from whom I have ventured to draw my narrative,

medicines of the Moslem leach proved entirely successful ; nor, on his return to

that the whole reign is, under Cardonne's hands, entirely changed. 1. He makes him (as I before remarked) the nephew, not the grandson of Abdalla ; in this he is supported by d'Hérbelot, vol. i, p. 18, and allows that he conquered all the rebels, and put down faction throughout the kingdom. 2. After the destruction of Talavera by Ordone, Abdalrahman applies to the Moors in Africa for assistance against the Christians ! and with this assistance, makes the Christians again victorious ! Of the wars in Africa, the siege of Tunis, the visit of Sancho, and the general success of Abdalrahman, he makes no mention whatever, excepting in summing up the King's character and exploits, when he merely lets fall the fact of the African expedition thus : “ *avide de gloire et de conquêtes il fit équiper une flotte chargée de troupes, et s'empara de Zeuta et Seldjemesse en Afrique,*” p. 328. Zeuta was indeed an easy conquest, but Seldjemessah was 122 French leagues, or 366 English miles from Zeuta, and the army had to

his country, did Sancho forget their cure nor the kind hospitality and good faith of his royal host. In contesting his rights, he sought and obtained the effectual aid of the Arabians ; and in the fight between that prince and Ordono, the Christians were astounded at the appearance of the Mohammedan standards, and at the shouts of the Moslems in the victory of Sancho. This prince retained a lively sense of friendship and good-will towards the Andalousians ; and on his accession to the crown, he concluded a

traverse a hostile country, filled with Berbers and robbers, and the partizans of the Fatimites—all enemies to the Spanish Ommiades, and to fight their way through the Atlas chain, before they could arrive at the latter town.—Vide d'Anville, *Geog.* vol. ii. 590. d'Herbelot, *Bib. Or.* vol. iii, *De la Géographie Descript.* Malte-Brun, p. 691.

treaty of peace and amity with the Kings of Cordova.

The Egyptian Soldan had invaded the states of Fez and of Tahart, and had swept all opposition before him. Abdalrahman, although he had lost the energy of his youth and the friends of his earlier days, did not tamely suffer this insult. Re-assembling his forces, under experienced commanders, he sent out a large army to Africa, where, in a series of successful exploits, he retrieved his honour, and victory once more crowned the declining days of the Arabian King.

A. D. 960. Those days were chiefly passed in the seclusion of the Azhara palace, where all the magnificence of military state, and all the elegant luxury that taste and riches could command, were employed to gratify his vanity,

pride, and pleasure. The superb seraglio of Abdalrahman, his wives and eunuchs, amounted to upwards of six thousand persons ; and when he moved abroad, he was attended in his progress by twelve thousand cavaliers, whose belts and scimetars were of massy gold.* In the retirement of private hours, his ears were regaled and his senses gratified by the voices and the presence of his favourite ladies ;† and when their accomplishments and talents had amused him for many

* Cardonne, tome i. p. 334.

† Azhara is not among the number ; she therefore must have been dead ; but her memory was preserved in a beautiful statue of her, which surmounted the grand entrance of the palace or village, and which, though contrary to law and religion, the power of the King caused to be placed there.—Vide Cardonne, tom. i, p. 330.

hours, he retired to converse with his friend Suleiman. The youth of the latter had been passed in the camp and the city ; but at a more advanced age, he had retired to the charms of a philosophic life, and to the happy occupations of beneficence and charity. The minds of Abdalrahman and Suleiman were strongly in accordance, and the friendship of each had been long and sincere. Under the virtuous name of Suleiman, the generous hand of the King distributed charity among the poor and destitute ; and to him the monarch repeated that singular avowal, which astonished a world, who, judging from outward appearances, had envied and admired the happiness of Abdalrahman.

“ I have now,” said he, “ reigned fifty years, have conquered my enemies, done

good to my subjects, and been equally dreaded by my foes and admired by my friends. Riches and honour have obeyed my call, and waited on my summons; and all earth's products and man's intelligence have been borrowed to supply my wants and minister to my pleasure. In this long period of time, I have carefully set down my happy days. Fourteen fills up the number, and attests the fallacy of this world's hopes, and the vanity of all its desires."*

* Cardonne, p. 329, Bib. Or. vol. i, Casiri, tom. 2. Conde, vol. i, Ascargorta, Hist. d'Esp. vol. i. The temperament of Abdalrahman seems ever to have been melancholy, and his poetry evinces a spirit suffering from late calamities, and dreading future misfortunes :

“ The wounded heart exhales in plaintive sighs ;
nor while the boisterous wind and raging storm pour

The splendour of Abdalrahman soon passed away ; and of those sumptuous halls of Azhara, which cost so much time and upwards of three millions sterling to erect, not a vestige now remains. The works of man are, indeed, far more permanent than his own existence ; yet, in the boundless annals of time, his life and

out their vengeance, can we hope to taste of calm. Alas ! my spring flowers (*a*) perished in their rising bloom ; and now I fear the blast may rend my lilies(*b*) from their stem. My happy hours are gone—perished is my pride. Dull night at length is come ; and well I know no new spring morn shall dissipate its shades, nor smile again upon my grief struck heart !”

(*a*) His early joys ; perhaps, the death of his son.

(*b*) His white hairs, or old age : he died aged seventy-four ; he ascended the throne at twenty-four years of age, and reigned fifty to fifty-one years.

his labours may equally be measured as a fleeting moment.*

But the wisdom and the virtues of the King of Cordova stand recorded in the eternal halls of memory, while his pomp and his palaces have for ever disappeared and “left not a wrack behind.” Human life has an inevitable though uncertain term, and its limits had been liberally extended towards Abdalrahman the Third. The death of a great prince, and the close of a splendid reign, during which the power, the wealth, and the pride of the Arabs in Spain rose to their zenith,

* Fall and Decline, c. 81 ; and probably the cement and marbles of Azhara were appropriated, by degrees, to the same purposes as the ruins of Rome. Pinkerton says the destruction of it was in the long wars—“the barbarous and fanatic wars of the middle ages.”—Pinkerton, *Geog. of Europe*, p. 183.

demand a few observations from the historian, and may merit some attention from the reflecting reader.

CHAPTER V.

Retrospect—Christianity—The Goths—Rise of Literature.

IN a savage state, the wants, and therefore the occupations of man, are few and simple. The easy attainment of his desires, the love of gain, and the thirst for conquest, alone predominate in his mind, and excite his passions, while in a ferocious courage resides his only standard of the power, or utility of the human race. Ever ready to shed his blood, in order to satisfy his pride, or satiate his love of plunder, he is equally

reluctant to employ his force, in tilling the earth, or acquiring property, and ease by any, but his favourite means.* The sword and the torch appear the symbols of his power and policy; the effeminacy of peace, he contemns; and the moral force, and progress of the human intellect, he neither possesses, nor desires.†

* Nec arare terram aut expectare annum, tam facile persuaseris, quam vocare hostes, et vulnera mereri: pigrum quin imò et iners videtur, sudore adquirere, quod, possis sanguine parare, § 14. De Mor. Germ. See also Montesquieu's remarkable and exact translation of this passage: *Esprit des Lois*, l. 30, C. 3.

† Hoc solo, (id est *Romani*) nomine, quisquid ignobilitatis, quisquid timiditatis, quisquid avaritiæ, quisquid luxuriæ, quisquid mendacii, immò quisquid vitiorum est, comprehendentes.—Liutprandi legatio citata ex *Scriptorib Ital.*, vol. ii., p. 481, Muratori.

Such were the early tribes who founded ancient Rome, such the coeval nations who conquered or settled down in Italy. In after years, the power of that splendid Empire withered in the barbarian's grasp, because its valour was exhausted by the conquest of the world, and all the simple virtues of its founders had disappeared in the luxury, or imbecility of their descendants. The government of the world dropped piecemeal into the hands of a people who easily dismembered it by the very means which the early Romans had employed to acquire it. Of the pure and indigenous people,* the

* *Ipsos Germanos, indigenas crediderim, minimè-que aliarum gentium adventibus, ut hospitibus mixtos.* Mor. Germ. 2. After ages have discovered, in this opinion of Tacitus, an error, and the flight of Oden from the Euxine, has been imagined, and the proba-

Roman author has given, on the whole, a far from uninteresting account. While he details their ferocity in war, their love of pillage and their ignorance of the charms, or occupations of civilised life, he describes with equal exactness and candour, their simplicity, their romantic love for their women, their fidelity in promise, their sacred respect for hospitality, and the free spirit natural to savage and roving individuals. All these qualities formed a striking contrast to those of the Romans of that period. Amongst these, all such virtues had been long extinct, and even the finer feelings of humanity were lost among a people, who numbered the murder of an Em-

ble descent of the northern hordes more accurately determined by greater and more laborious writers.

peror for fifty successive years, and who closed the business or the follies of the day, by the disgusting excitement of the Spoliarium, and the indiscriminate slaughter of men and wild animals.* To the barbaric virtues, the empire could offer no resistance, and consequently when the Goths attacked it, it gave way, and the tribes of the North became the rulers, and their leaders the Princes of Europe. As the power of the Goths increased, the Western Empire was completely subdued ; in the luxuriant plains of Italy, the Lombards recivilised both the vanquished and the victors,

* The place where the dead and dying gladiators were dragged to, by a hook stuck in their bodies, from the reeking arena, smoking with the blood of bipeds and quadrupeds !—Vide Senec. Epist., No. 93. Plin. C. 36.

while the more savage tribes of Huns, Franks, and Vandals overwhelmed Gaul, Germany and Great Britain. Among the court and populace of Constantinople, Paganism had already been discarded, and that Imperial city enclosed a curious assemblage of theologists, polemics, horse jockeys, and charioteers. While each day the empire lost a kingdom, a province, or a colony, the attention of the capital, and of the Emperors was absorbed in the useful and dignified quarrels of the Arians, Athanasians, Nestorians, Manicheans, and hundred other violent disputants, whose extraordinary occupation, and chief pleasure seemed to consist, in laying down the principle, that their belief was incomprehensible, and then proceeding to explain it. The Gothic tribes, in their

turn, embraced the name of Christianity. Ever addicted to superstition in its darkest forms, they continued, under the new appellation of Christians, their ancient practice, and belief in charms, divination, and sorcery.* The religion they had embraced was but the shadow of that, preached by the founder ; its pure doctrine no longer existed, legends, and unmeaning dogmas had supplied its place, and among the millions who professed, we can discover few, who either knew or practised the virtues of Christianity. Without a notion of its sublime object, or of the means by which that object was to be attained, the new world rose to eminence and power in the practice of debauchery, rapine, and murder, and men were easily persuaded, that they

* Mor. Germ. § 10.

could purchase remittance of their sins, by the empty forms of devotion, or by the more solid, and useful endowments of abbeys and monasteries. On these terms, they were permitted to commit all the atrocities which ignorant fanaticism suggests, and to violate all the virtues, which true religion prescribes and practices.

The continents of Gaul and Germany, Italy and its Isles, were not sufficient to satisfy the ambition, and avarice of the Goths, and they invaded the south of Europe, and carried fire and sword into the territories of Africa and Egypt. Spain, the richest and most civilised province of Rome, yielded to their arms, received the laws of Evaricus, and the customs of the Visigoths ; while the power of the Church was immense, and

its tyranny commensurate. The Ecclesiastics of Spain ordained laws, which reveal the spirit of ignorant prejudice, and bespeak a ferocious pride ; and in the ordonnances of the bishops of that day, we may discover the original of those monstrous laws, which were faithfully copied, and successfully enforced by the inquisition, in a later age.* Africa was the scene of terrific devastation. This granary of Rome, and the provinces which compose its fertile district, were ravaged, sacked and burnt by an unmitigating fury. The inhabitants were cruelly massacred, and the dignity of civil and religious superstition, then, as now, represented in the persons of the noble and the priest, were laughed

* Montesquieu : *Esprit des Lois*, l. 28, C. 1.

at, despised, and annihilated. The infirmities of age, the tenderness of sex, were equally disregarded, and the barbarians appear, in this instance, to have lost or forgotten the generous virtues and romantic spirit of their ancestry. No extent of carnage satiated their thirst for blood ; no quantity of plunder appeased their avidity for spoil.

In the close of the tenth century, the literature of modern Europe was again destined to unfold, and the northern tribes were assuming a fixed, and definite territory. In receiving the religion of the Prophet, Asia had expelled them from her shores ; Africa had been reconquered by the armies of Medina ; and beyond the frontiers of the Pyrenees, the Arab power governed, and civilised the universe.

The rise of literature in modern Europe, although now a remote event, may be accurately traced to the connexion which long subsisted between the people of Provence, and the Spaniards. Accustomed to the elegance, the fire, and the gigantic imagery of the Arabian poetry, the refugees of Galicia, and the Asturias, imbibed similar ideas, and the Provencal copied, according to his ability, the style, and sentiments of the Eastern bards. The prevailing characteristics of Gothic poetry may, although a still more ancient event, be derived from the same fertile source, and though the flight of Odin,* has been now abandoned as an

* An idea entertained by Gibbon, in the first volume, and renounced by him, as incredible, in the last volume of his great history.—Vol. 1, p. 390 ; Vol. 12, p. 406. If the reader, not satisfied with

untenable theory, and ridiculous assumption, yet, we may discover the great political institutions of the northern tribes, to have arisen in an eastern clime. Tacitus has described the customs of these tribes with much detail, and the

tracing the analogy of all the nations of the Old Continent in those two great features, feudality and religion, pursues his researches among the people of the New World, or America, he there sees the same features displayed with clearness and exact semblance, and he doubts no more that the dispersion of the great primeval central tribes were equally the populators of Peru, as of Ethiopia, China, and Europe.—Vide Robertson's *America*, Irving's *Columbus*, Herrera, *Conquesta de Mexico*, and last, though not least, that acute, and interesting work, Howitt's *History of Priestcraft*, the five first chapters; a book which, to the honour of the present age, has travelled through five editions.—See also Godwin's *Lives of the Necromancers*, pp. 184, 185, 204, 205.

characteristics which he narrates of them, in their most savage state, prove their origin, and continued to prevail among them, during the middle ages, and are now extant, and visible among every nation of the civilised world. The Tartars were probably the great hive, whence swarmed the populating myriads into more attractive climes, and countries. The love of conquest, and the necessity of a continual migration,* induced these

* Without those restraints on matrimony which are found in more civilized communities, their (the Tartars) numbers had naturally a prodigious increase, and as they despised the idea of cultivating the ground, the same extent of country which could have maintained *thousands* of husbandmen, was found often insufficient for *hundreds* of roaming pastors. Emigration alone could remedy this inconvenience.—Richardson's Dissertations on Eastern Nations, Ch. 3, sect. 1, § 1. 142, 143.

hordes to overrun Europe, where they discharged the superfluities of their overgrown race, and the various nations described in history as Goths, Vandals, and Franks, possessed and displayed the properties of their ancestors in their love for war, wandering and rapine. The great system of feudality which they established, wherever they overthrew the Roman Empire, had flourished in the east from the earliest and unrecorded times. The election of one great chief, to whom all the clans or tribes were subject in time of war, and whose fealty expired in the shouts of victory, is only a copy of the customs of the Persians, Indians, and early Arabs. The princes, or rulers of each tribe, professed homage, and sometimes paid tribute to the supreme head, and wherever the genius or

courage of the monarch equalled, or excelled those, of his tributary lords, these remained in subjection, and he governed in peace. Eastern history displays a successive reiteration of this fact in the numerous instances recited, where rebellion has always been created, or encouraged by the weakness, or vices of the reigning king. It was the curse of the Arabs of Spain, the scourge of the Asturian Christians, and the desolater of Asia and Africa, for ages, under the caliphate. The allotment of lands to different chieftains, after success in war, was also a custom of the east, practised from immemorial time, and the power of the counts and barons of Christian Europe was obtained, or extorted by means exactly similar to those employed by Rustan, the founders of the Saljucides, Ag-

labites, Fatemites, and a hundred others. The early assemblies of the Germans, the states under Charlemagne, and the parliaments of Paris, are found under other names among the nations of Asia.

The great Kahn summoned the tribes of Tartary, the Arabians met in council at Ocad and Mecca, and the Arabs assembled at Toledo, Seville and Cordova, and ordained laws, and elected or confirmed the sovereign representative of the people.

To the genius and fancy of Arabia, (poetic from the earliest times), Europe owes her plentiful display of fairies, demons, and angels. The fables of Bidpai spoke morality through the organs of the brute creation, and the exploits of the Dives and the Peri were translated or copied in the feats of giants and fairies.

The knight of Christian romance had already figured in the tales of Rustan, Haherman, and Alph, the love and gallant devotion to woman, or the redress and protection of some innocent and injured Peri, was the exciting cause for their feats of valour and chivalry.

The spirit and the practice of tournaments, and of single combats, where the power and skill of one devoted warrior were employed and displayed for the safety of thousands, is exemplified through ancient history, and adds another proof of the similarity which prevailed in the customs of the eastern world, and those of the northern Goths.

Among the lovely scenes of Arabia Felix, seven hundred years before the era of Provençal literature commences, the Arabians were used to assemble to enjoy

the pleasures of fancy and vivid imagery in the poems of their country, to hear the eloquence of the learned, and the harangues of their impassioned brethren. An unclouded sun, a serene atmosphere, and the tempered climate of Yemen, were peculiarly happy elements for poetry to spring from ; these imparted to it a most luxurious tone, while the wide deserts, and inaccessible mountains inspired an exalted, and perhaps an exaggerated style, and the similes, so much loved by the Arabs, were like their own sensations, vehement and gigantic.*

The immortal work of Mohammed is a vestige of his rich fancy : it combines

* Sir W. Jones' Essay I, on the Poetry of Eastern Nations, pp. 163 to 183 ; *Mélanges Asiatiques*, vol. 2, C. 4, p. 181.

the fervid tones of an enthusiast with the tender accents of a poet, and its denunciations are as awful as they are sublime*.

The wealth and the power of the Abasides were generously displayed in their unbounded patronage of the arts, sciences, and literature. Almansor the Second caliph of that race, was a lover of poetry, letters, and philosophy ; but his favourite pursuit was the useful and sublime science of astronomy. In the construction of imperial Bagdad, he consulted the wants of his astronomers, and various lofty and beautiful towers adorned the banks of the Tigris, for the purpose

* See Gagnier, *Vie de Mohammed*, on the style of this work, vol. 3, p. 366 ; Sale's Preface to *Alcoran*, and also on the skill and knowledge of the Prophet in Medicine ; See Gagnier, tome 3, c. 21.

of taking the celestial observations. In his reign, the celebrated Greek physician, George Backtwishaw, or Bocht Jesu, cured the Caliph of a disorder, and was, in return, honoured and recompensed by distinguished employments; and to an indigestion of Almanzor, the Arabians owed great progress in the medical science, and the works of the learned physician still amuse, and enlighten the students of eastern history.

The court of Hâroun Al Raschid was filled with poets, astronomers, physicians, and grammarians, and this literary prince never left his palace without a numerous retinue of the skilled and learned in his suite. The glory of these two reigns, great though it was, was eclipsed by the splendour of the succeeding caliph, Al Mâmoun. All arts, and every science

sought and found with him, an equal protection, and he principally attended to the means by which a wide and general diffusion of all kinds of knowledge should take place throughout his dominions. To every mosque a college was attached, where the Greek and Arabic languages were cultivated with assiduity and success. The Koran was carefully revised and republished, the laws, civil and religious, were studied and improved, and the healing art made still further and more brilliant progress. Natural history was attended to, and the most celebrated Greek authors were translated and read by the caliph and his court.

The science of chemistry was formed and improved; the Arabs invented the great alembics for distillation they, dived into the secrets of nature, discovered and

displayed the affinities of chalks and acids, and proclaimed the powers and different uses of the earth's minerals. Their fervid imaginations led them often away into the wild speculations of fancy, where their chemistry degenerated into a pursuit of alchemy, and their observations of the heavenly bodies into attempts at drawing the horoscopes, and predicting the destinies of mankind. The conquered provinces of Syria, Armenia, and Egypt, rich in literary and scientific stores, furnished their abundance to the capital of the Abassides. Camels daily entered the gates of the city loaded with books that were revised by skilful professors, translated by learned grammarians, and scattered with profusion among an eager and curious people. For three hundred years the Abassides

encouraged, and the Arabians of the Eastern world pursued with zeal and success the studies and the possession of the arts and sciences. Among all these, however, poetry was the favourite art. The abstruse sciences, the learned languages, might be cultivated by the prince, the noble, and the philosopher ; but the accents of the poet attracted and entranced the attention of all classes.*

* See Guinguené, *Hist. Lit.* ; vol. 2, c. 3 and 4. *Littérature du Midi* par Sismondi, vol. 1, c. 2 and 3. Gibbon, vol. 10, c. 52, 53, 54, &c. Cournand, *Révolutions de la Littérature*, c. 10 ; and for the general facts of this and the following chapter, see the above works—Sir W. Jones, *Mélanges Asiatiques*, *Alcoran* ; Pocock, *Specimen and Dynasties* ; Richardson's *Dissertations* ; *Esprit des Mœurs*, vol. 1 ; MSS. of the Escorial and *Bib. du Roi* ; *Vie des Troubadours*, vol. 1 ; *Antiquitates Ital.*, vol. 2 and 3, &c. The Saracens became a literary people. The prosperity

The style and the sentiments were chaste and tender, the love of woman impassioned and profound ; yet, the

of the Mohammedan empire did not relax their ardour, and subsequent political distractions interrupted not the acquisition of knowledge. The arts and sciences were patronized by the caliphs of the East, of the West, and of Africa. At one period, six thousand professors cultivated liberal studies in the college of Bagdad. Twenty schools made Grand Cairo a chief seat of letters, and the talents of the students were exercised in the perusal of the royal library, which consisted of one hundred thousand manuscripts. The African writers dwell with pride and satisfaction on the literary institutions which adorned the towns on the northern coast of their sandy plains. The sun of science arose even in Almagreb, and the manners of the Moorish savage were softened by philosophy.—Hist. of Mohammedanism, c. 6, p. 386. The establishment of the Saracens in the Peninsula (Spain) was completed in the eighth century, and the elder Spanish romances are strongly tinged with Arabic.

sterner chaunt of the bard could excite the warrior to arms, as the lay of the minstrel enchanted the harem and refined the populace. The Arabian troubadour, and the Eastern Trouvère were equally courted and caressed, and in music and sculpture the Arabs gave lessons to the world.

CHAPTER VI.

Prosperity of Spain under Abdalrahman—Cordova—
Productions—Commerce—The arts—Literature—
Medicine—Al-Hakim ascends the throne—Rebel-
lion of the Zanhags.

THE Ommiades in Spain were not excelled by their proud adversaries in the east. Anxious and able to emulate the literary glories of Bagdad, the cities of Andalouz were distinguished for their refinement in arts and sciences.

I attempt not to delineate all the glories and utility of the Spanish Arabs, at this epoch, I draw but a faint outline of a splendour which has never been exceeded, and the deeper knowledge, or the

vivid fancies of my reader, must fill up and perfect the brilliancy and colouring of the picture.

The riches, the physical force, and the commerce of Spain, under the reign of Abdalrahman and his successor, form the great proofs of the power and civilisation of the people. Besides the large sums spent in frequent and protracted wars, and in the invasion of Africa and Egypt, Abdalrahman maintained a standing army of 100,000 men, a large and rapidly increasing navy, 12,000 horse body guards most gorgeously caparisoned ; 6,300 persons in his household, and a stud of 4,000 blood horses for his private use. He built, at an expence of three millions sterling, the palace, and the town of Azhara, he laid down noble aqueducts, irrigated large agricultural

districts, erected mosques, colleges, and halls in Seville, Murcia, Toledo, and Cordova, and embellished the latter with rich specimens of arts and architecture.* He formed large libraries, he

† Among the most remarkable still extant, is the great tower, built by the celebrated architect Geber near Seville; the aqueducts in various places, the mosque of Cordova, and the Alhambra of Granada, vide d'Anville, *Géogr. Descr.* de Malte-Brun and Pinkerton's *Geography of Spain*. The style and solidity of the Arabian architecture was unique, and more than any other combined grace and solidity. Wherever time has been its only enemy, the building of the Arabian architect has still defied its ravages, where modern erections have been added on, a few centuries have witnessed their crumbling ruins, while still the old Moresco edifice derides the power of the elements and the efforts of the arch destroyer. The stones used were of an immense size, and the mortar called *japia* used to cement the walls, floors and ceilings, was a well kneaded mixture of quick

welcomed and richly rewarded the literator, the artist, and the philosopher, and the various efforts which were made during his reign to improve commerce, and to perfect agriculture, are still extant and visible signs of an enlarged and useful magnificence. The taxes of five millions of thriving subjects, the commercial customs, called Azak, or one-tenth on the value of the imports, and the legal tithe paid either in kind or money on the vast and precious productions of the fertile land, the accumulated booty in foreign wars, the tribute from Jews and Christians,*

lime and sand, run into the apertures and hammered down with iron instruments by the hands of powerful and skilful workmen, vide Guinguené, *Hist. Litt. C.* 4, p. 208 ; Conde, *C.* 25, p. 231 ; and *Tableau des Révolutions de l'Europe*, par Koch, t. 2, p. 37.

* The tribute money was exacted from all the

and from conquered provinces, formed the vast springs from whence the Arab monarch drew the yearly supplies of eight millions sterling, which were to support his proud splendour, and again

Jews and Christians throughout the Andalousian state, wherever no marriage with any Arabian man or woman had taken place, vide Casiri, Bibl. Arab. Hisp. tome 2, Cardonne, tome 1. The treaty between Abdalrahman I, and the Gallicians was thus expressed, "In the name of the most merciful God, The magnificent King Abdalrahman, grants peace and protection to all the laymen and ecclesiastics, Christians of Spain. On his soul he swears faith, fully to observe the treaty, provided the Christians do deliver or cause to be delivered into his treasury, for five successive years, 10,000 ounces of virgin gold and 10,000 ounces of pure silver, 10,000 horses, and as many mules, 1000 breast plates, 1000 lances, 1000 swords. Done at Cordova, the 3rd of the Moon, Safer. Heg. Ann. 142." Vide *Los Arabes en España*, par Conde, vol. 1, c. 20.

returned to augment his country's prosperity.

The capital contained 200,000 houses, 600 temples and colleges, and 900 public baths. In the Andalousian territory the traveller might have numbered 80 chief cities or *Walisates*, 300 towns or *Wazirah*, and 18,000 villages or *alcaldas*. The census of Cordova returned one million souls, and the great cities of the empire were, in all cases, equally thickly populated.*

The sketch of Abdalrahman's reign

* Cardonne, tom. 1, p. 337, Conde loc. cit. C. 38, Bibl. Arab. Hisp. &c. The former writer, trusting to Arab romance, writes, that on the Guadalquivir alone, were to be seen 12,000 villages or *alcaldes*, or 60 villages for every mile!! The river flowing from its source to its entrance into the sea, above Cadiz, about 200 miles.

has shown the power and extent of his military and naval operations, and the splendour of his commerce was proved in the numbers of cargo ships which, issuing from the various parts of Spain, sought in the luxurious city of the Bosphorus, and the rich towns of Syria and Egypt, to traffic and exchange the respective wants of the East and West.

The armour and cutlery of Spain* were in high repute throughout the warlike dominions of the Fatemites ; and the cloths and silks of Grenada, Murcia, and Baza were eagerly sought for by the merchants of Alexandria, Aleppo, and Byzantium These, with the cele-

* Among the best works for cutlery were those established at Ronda in the south. Malte-Brun, *Géogr. Descr. de l'Espagne*, about 67 miles N.W. of Gibraltar ; d'Anville, tome 2, p. 214.

brated leather called morocco,* (which was prepared in high perfection,) spun cottons, oils, iron, cochineal, and quick-silver,† formed the chief branches of the export trade. The returns were usually effected in the drugs and spices of the East, in the rice and cotton of Egypt, and in the sugars and dyes of Asia and India. In the precious metals, Spain was, at that day, abundant ; on the coasts of Andalousia, the coral divers pursued their trade with a rich success ; and on the Catalonian shores the pearl

* This manufacture was imported from the Fezzan and other states of West Africa, where it appears to have existed from time immemorial, and is still extant at this day.

† Vide geograph. appendix to this work.

fishery opened a field, for large and rapid returns.*

In their commercial treaties, the Arabs of Spain preserved a free trade with Constantinople, and all the ports of the Greek empire, with the Emirs of Africa and Egypt, and those of the Syrian coast.

Nor were the arts cultivated with less energy or success. As lovers of agriculture, no nation has ever possessed more just and beneficial laws than the Agrarian edicts of the Spanish Arabs, and nowhere, either in the ancient or the modern world, has the sowing and reaping of the earth been aided by more of the intelligence, activity, and policy of the

* Ibidem, Cardonne and Conde, tom. 1, and Bib. Arab. Hisp. tom. 2.

powerful and learned, than in the kingdom of Andalouz.

Many inventions of the present age, more especially those which contribute to literature, are due to Arabian intellect and skill. Paper, ink, and binding are the arts of the Spaniard under Abdalrahman. From the East, that monarch imported the culture of the rice, the sesame, and the sugarcane. In the vast and magnificent gardens of his palaces he gave a pleasing proof of the talent and industry of man, by the simultaneous culture of plants and fruits, from different climates, which equally flourished in the sweet atmosphere of Spain. The African palm-tree saluted the orange-blossoms of Seville, while the olive of Syria, and the sugar-cane of India threw up their stems amidst the graceful ten-

drills of the loaded vine. The ports of Sidonia, Almeria, Valentia, and Arragon, were beautified, deepened, and enlarged, and the bay of Algeciras alone could reckon upwards of sixty foreign vessels constantly in harbour. The Jews appear to have enjoyed the monopoly of the foreign commerce, while the Arabs gave their attention chiefly to manufactures and agriculture.

In jurisprudence, they bowed to the law of their Prophet, and the will of God.

The copious richness of their language was studied and revised, and the colleges of Granada, Seville, and Cordova, were placed under the direction of celebrated professors. Great libraries were carefully collected by the kings, and magnificent buildings erected to receive them. The Meruan palace at Cordova, the Al-

cazars of Murcia, Seville, and Toledo, were filled with manuscripts, which have since enriched or encumbered the shelves of European collections. All that was interesting in men of science, or eminent among the learned, were invited into Spain, their works were studied and imitated; and the literary Al-Hakim II, the founder of the Cordovan academy, presented upwards of 600,000 volumes for the public use of his capital. The number of Arabic authors that Spain produced, was indeed so immense that many separate accounts were written of the biography of those born in the different cities, and also of those who applied themselves to particular branches of arts, sciences, or literature. The monarchs of Cordova carefully encouraged the eloquence of the pulpit. The Khotbah

rose from a mere invocation for the prosperity of prince and people, to be a rational and impressive discourse, where the authority of the Koran was quoted, and the ability of the Khetab displayed, in denouncing vice, and immorality, and in exciting in the hearts of his audience, the love and respect for their religion, and the precepts of virtue.

“Accustom yourselves,” said one Ahmed Ben Khetab, “O my children ! to obey the laws, and to treat with respect the King, who is the successor of the Prophet, and the dispenser of God’s mercy ; and be ye, the one to another, charitable and just, and forgive one another the sins, for such is Allah towards you ; and if ye forget your brothers, so neither will he remember you,” &c.

In medicine, I have already observed, that the skill of the Arabs was justly renowned and their good faith was so well known, that a Christian king did not hesitate to trust his life to their care and tenderness. In the fields of speculative philosophy, the Spanish Arabs equally vied with their brethren of the East. In the palaces of the monarch, and of his favourite minister, the Hagib Ahmed, these philosophers met, to discuss and promulgate their opinions. The celebrated Ben Cassem ; the Cadi Aben Jahrab ; the Wazir, Issa Ben Aschab ; and the opulent physician, Zahrawi ; opened their houses at all hours to the learned and eminent in arts or sciences. Zahrawi established, in his house, a rendezvous of celebrated physicians, who were considered to have founded the

school of which Averroes became afterwards the most illustrious disciple.*

* One of the most able and eminent philosophers of the Arabs in Spain. His time was about the middle of the twelfth century; he was a native of Cordova, he introduced the great theories of Aristotle, and gave lectures on the same, and his life and writings have been noticed and fully discussed by Hottiger. Vossius, and by the erudite Bayle; see also *Bibl. Or.* d'Herbelot, Art. Rosch, of which Bayle complains (note Q, and very justly.) His whole name was Abon Valid Ben Mohammed Ben Achmed Ben Rashd. He travelled into Africa, and was president of the great Fezzan college for many years. Samarcand was famous for having transmitted to the Arabs the art of making paper, and the Arabs improved and perfected it by inventing the manufacture of linen.—See *History of Mohammedanism*, c. 2, p. 118, and the divers authorities there quoted in c. 5, note, p. 283. The herbal of Dioscorides was enriched by the Saracens, with additions of two thousand plants; and their knowledge of the vegetable

In the perfumed gardens of the Guadalquivir, and in the suburbs of the royal Cordova, amidst a great and prosperous people, enriched with the elegance of arts, and the treasures of science and literature, the stranger wandered in an unclouded clime, whose sultry heat was tempered by the serene and freshened breeze, that usually rose at eventide, and seemed, as if in paradise. The smiling face of nature, the skill and intelli-

world enabled them to insert in their pharmacopeia several remedies which had been unknown to the Greeks. The labours of the Arabs might, even in the present day, be of service (at least, such is the opinion of Sprengel) if our physicians would study the Arabic language, and the medical writings of Messec, Geber, Razes, Averroes, and Avicenna.—Bibl. Arab. Hisp. Hist. de Médecine par Scuderi; Sprengel, p. 343; Beithar, MSS. Escorial, p. 834; Vide. History of Mohammedanism, vol. 1, c. 6.

gence of man, were presented to his observations in their most gorgeous colouring. As his eye glanced on the city, it embraced vast gardens, salubrious fountains, marble halls and palaces ; the graceful temples of the Prophet's God, and the public colleges of taste and instruction. The glittering array of the King's Slavonian guards, their fiery steeds, their splendid arms, their music, and the sound of their thrilling *tecbir**, struck his eyes

* The *tecbir* was the martial trumpet and war cry of the Arabians, and its sound was most inspiring—its notes were heard for miles round. The other martial instruments were *Sili*, a deep tone, the *Yemens*, the cymbals, and the drum. The favourite implements of the lover and the poet were the *minnim*, or small lyre, and the ancient *Barbut*, the *Aber* or flute, and the *Kitar*, so much used by the Spanish Arabs, a lute of six strings—hence the word guitar. The drums of the Arabs were called *Tehl*: and *Teblek* answers to our kettle-drum. *Gamdum* the great

and ears with admiration and awe.* From time to time beauty, (such as Araby and Spain alone can show) crossed his path, and fixed his entranced regards. While, as he wandered from the capital to its less stirring environs, his vision was overwhelmed by the multitude of palaces, villages, and hamlets teeming with population, industry, and wealth. In the

trumpet of the infantry, the Buri or hunting clarion, and the hautboys and pipes were called Sanai.—See *Conjectures on Eastern Music*, Richardson, p. 208, 212; Guingené, c. 4; *Essai de Laborde, de la Musique Arabe*, tom. 1, p. 178, de M. de St. Paterne, Cardonne, &c.

* The Slavonian guard were divided into three companies of four thousand each: one on duty with the King at the Azhara, one at the Meruan palace in Cordova, and one ready for active service.—Vid. Cardonne, *Conde*, *Bibl. Hisp.*, and *MSS. de l'Habitude chez les Orientaux*, *Bib. du Roi*, Voce “Orient.”

rich gardens of the noble, the gay lover swept the strings of his kitar, whilst in this region of love, amidst Eastern splendour, and in perfumed gales, he poured forth, at the feet of beauty, those strains of passion and poetic thought, whose fragments, wafted to the frontier, were eagerly caught up by the aspiring troubadour, and again re-echoed through the plains and cities of Europe.*

* When Provence was annexed to the throne of Berenger, Count of Catalonia, and the Provençals and Catalonians became intermixed, a direct and immediate impression of oriental sentiments and manners was made upon the Christian world. The Provençal poets are indebted for some of their most beautiful images to their acquaintance with Arabic literature. The notions of honour, the mysticism of love, the harmonious blending of opinion and sentiment, the romantic grace of manners, and the character of the female sex, which the Troubadours des-

The wise and generous policy of Abdalrahman had, for a long time, ceded to his son, a portion of the cares of government, and when Ahmed Ben Zaid died, the prince Al-Hakim became the minister of state. The long duration of Abdalrahman's reign, although a subject for pleasantries to that monarch,* was a matter of great importance to the prosperity of his people. The youth of the prince was free from the temptations of an unbridled authority; his manhood was confirmed by the precepts and example of a wise and vir-

cribe, are in accordance with the general strain of oriental poetry; and rhyme, one great characteristic of the moderns, was derived by those bards from Arabic measure.—Jones' Works, vol. 5; *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions*, tom. 4, p. 470.

* "It is at thy expence, my son," said Abdalrahman, "that I live so long!"—Conde, *loc. cit.*

tuous court ; and when, on his father's death, Al-Hakim ascended the throne at the mature age of forty-eight years, he combined every quality which could render him a worthy successor to so great a King, and all that could contribute to maintain the happiness of the empire. On the morrow of Abdalrahman's decease, he was proclaimed the King of Andalouz.

The ceremony of his inauguration was imposing, and gives some idea of the splendour and customs of the time. In the grand hall of audience at the Azhara, the new King appeared, seated on the throne of the Prophet. Around, were his brothers, and the other members of the royal family. Beyond these were ranged, in grand costume, the captains of the Spanish, African, and Slavonian re-

giments ; and the Hageb, and all the Wazirs of state were placed at the foot of the throne. The royal body guard, with their splendid costume, their shields, and unsheathed scimetars, stretched along the stately hall ; and the black eunuchs of the seraglio and household, in white tunics, and with glittering battle-axes, were imposingly displayed in double file. In the great courts, and in the gardens of the palace, select battalions from all the different regiments were drawn up with their music and standards ; and the outer gates were guarded by a legion of white slaves, armed with scimetars. The town of Azhara was crowded with men of eminence, nobles, citizens from the capital, and foreign ministers. The oaths of allegiance and fidelity were proffered and accepted, and the shouts

of the vast multitude, rising through the gorgeous halls, proclaimed Al-Hakim King.

On the succeeding day, the interment of Abdalrahman took place in Cordova. The guards lined the streets from the palace to the superb mausoleum, constructed for the final resting place. The different bodies of the law and medicine, the great Imams and preachers attended the mournful procession, and all classes of the people accompanied the body to its tomb.

“Lost to us is our father,” they cried, in the bitterness of their grief, “the protector of the weak, the benefactor of the poor, the terror of the wicked, the defender of Islamism.” But their despair was softened, and their hopes revived by the universal expression of all men’s opi-

nions on the happy prospects of Al-Hakim's reign. In the song of the poet, and in the sermons of the priest, the same bright hopes were held out, the same bright future predicted. The mind of Al-Hakim was addicted to every useful pursuit, and in his government he ever encouraged peace. To preserve this blessing, he spared no exertions, both at home and abroad. The two tranquil years which followed his accession, he passed in the delicious retreat of Azhara, surrounded by all the literary men of Spain, and many of the eminent Asiatics, on whom he showered the rich marks of his approbation and esteem. But the turbulent spirit of the age could no longer permit a continuance of such pleasing prosperity to King or people. The Arab warriors sighed once more for the field of

battle, and for the excitement of victory, and the lovely scene of peace which blessed the setting of Abdalrahman's life, and welcomed in the advent of his successor, appeared likely to close, by the publication of the Alighed.* Excited by

* The Al i Ghàdi, vel Ghàd, vel Gedàl fi Sebel Allado, wars against Infidels in God ; the purport and the terms of this Arabic crusade were nearly the same in the time of Al-Hakim as in the days of Abou Bekr. The order of the day, issued by the former, run as follows :—“ The holy war is, with all true Mussulmans a sacred duty, none are exempt from serving in it, except children who cannot obtain their parents' consent. In time of urgent danger, this exemption ceases to be valid—the first of all duties being the defence of our country, and the call of the generals to arms. The *enemy shall either profess Islamism, or pay the usual taxes* levied on all the infidels throughout our dominions. This choice, however, shall not be exercised, if the enemy is the invader. Every Mus-sulman who shall retreat before the enemy shall be

this warlike call, and somewhat galled by

branded as a coward, and a transgressor of the law unless for every Mohammedan there shall be, at least two unbelievers. *The women, children, and the aged shall, on all occasions, be spared*; also all religious hermits, except they shall have abetted or aided in the attack against us. *All letters of safety, granted to an enemy, can never be violated under any pretext whatsoever.* All booty (the one-fifth as by law subtracted) shall be divided on the field of battle. The cavalry soldiers shall have TWO THIRDS, the infantry ONE THIRD. Whoever shall serve in this war, even though a volunteer, and of another religion, shall have such part in the booty as his commanding officer shall judge fit. The general-in-chief shall have to distribute such rewards and distinctions as shall seem to him proper, to all those who have signalised themselves by feats of valour or skill. Any Mussulman who, among the booty to be divided, shall observe anything which may belong to him, shall so declare to the Cadis of the army. These, upon his simple oath, shall cause restitution of such object, or if the

the insinuation thrown out, that this excess of literary pursuits might have diminished, if not extinguished, whatever stock of courage he might have originally possessed, Al-Hakim proceeded to invade the frontiers, and exchange the sounds of civilised life for the savage, though thrilling shout of victory. Advancing to St. Etienne, he opened the war against the Christians; his operations were everywhere successful; the King of Leon in vain opposed his forces,

plunder has been already divided, shall pay him down in money its value."—Conde, vol. i, c. 42. The Italics which I have marked, show how unchanged the policy and laws of the Arabs remained, and the text was merely singled out to point the great preference given, and the importance attached to the cavalry over the foot soldiers.—Vide *Bibl. Or.*, vol. ii, p. 75—200; articles Géhád and Harb.

the presence of the Arab monarch, and the exact discipline of the army, universally prevailed, and the campaign closed by the assault and taking of Zamora. The King returned to Cordova with a large booty ; he was saluted as Almostansir Billah* by the army and people, and his triumphal entry into the capital terminated the short, but successful war. The King of Leon sued for, and easily obtained peace ; and Al-Hakim, having obliterated the supposed stigma of cowardice, wisely resolved to devote the remainder of his life to useful employments, and the administration of his opulent resources.

Sancho was, at that time, King of

* Or, " assisted by God."—Voce Mostan—sir-al. Billah.—De Sacy.

Leon and the Asturias. Tumults and rebellion were still the prevailing character of that country's history ; and the murder of the brave and generous monarch, by the hand of an ungrateful rebel, seemed likely to renew the war between the Arabs and Christians. The widow of Sancho, however, who governed during the minority of her son, Ramiro III, instantly renewed or confirmed the treaty, nor was it again infringed during the lifetime of Al-Hakim*.

This epoch was truly the consummation of the pride and prosperity of Spain. Even the tribes of the Arabian desert had heard the praises and renown of the Ommiades, and the Chazaragites, one of the noblest and most ancient clans,

* Mariana Hispan. Rer. Histor. vol. 1.

sought and found protection at the court of Cordova.

The abuses which had crept into the religious practices of the Mussulmans, were duly investigated by the devout monarch, and especially as to the immoderate use of wine, which had been introduced among the army on the northern frontier. To prevent this abuse, Al-Hakim issued a decree, by which two-thirds of the vines were to be annually destroyed, and the produce of the remaining one-third was to be immediately consumed, or made into sweet preserves. The grand justiciary of Spain, Ben Mondhir, was entrusted with the execution of this decree.

It were needless to detail the names, as it is impossible to narrate here, the lives of the poets, philosophers, artists,

and historians of Spain :* who increased

* The Imam Cassem Ben Mohammed, of Cordova, is the author of an interesting and clear work, entitled, “ Akhbar al Olama al Andalous,” or the great Arab doctors in law who were natives of Spain ; and the Cadhi Ayed Ben Moussa al Jahsi, born one hundred and fifty years later than Cassem, has written the lives of the illustrious men, natives of Cordova. —Bibl. Or., vol. 1, p. 150. The reader may form some idea of the variety and importance of the works of the Arabic authors, both in the East and West, by consulting with attention the Bibl. Or., vol. 2, pp. 374 to 412.—Among the most famous in the time and at the court of Al-Hakim, were Ahmed Ben Abdalmalec of Seville, the Macchiavelli of his time, and the principal magistrate of Cordova. The historian of Spain, Ahmed Ben Said el Hamdani, who lived at Azhara, in a property given him by the King, and the poet Arramedhi, whose life and adventures are interesting and characteristic, and who, while he enjoyed favour, had apartments in the Alcazar ; and last, though not least, the celebrated poet of Spain,

in number, and, for many years, pre-

Aben Ferage, native of Jaën, and the companion of Arramedhi. While the greatest portion of the Western world was buried in the darkest ignorance, the Moors of Spain lived in the enjoyment of all those arts which beautify and polish society. Amidst a constant succession of wars, they cast a lustre upon Spanish history, which the nerveless natives of these days may look back upon with shame and envy. In Cordova, and in every other city, schools were founded, and the numerous public libraries invited the curiosity of the studious. Letters were patronised by the caliphs of the West, with the same liberality which distinguished and ennobled the caliphs of the East. Cordova became the centre of politeness, taste, and genius, and tilts and tournaments, and other costly shows, were long the darling pastimes of a wealthy, happy people. During the course of two centuries this court continued to be the resort of the professors of all polite arts, and for all who valued themselves upon their military and knightly accomplishments.”—*History of Mohammedanism*, p. 141, 142, c. 3.

served their excellence and just reputation. Academies of learned men, in number and occupation like those of modern times,* were founded by Al-Hakim, in Cordova, which held its meetings in the Meruan palace; while others, of more or equal celebrity, sprung up in Toledo, Seville, Guadalarra, and Granada; some under the auspices of famous jurisconsults, others under the direction of doctors of the Mohammedan law. In these assemblies, some chapter of the "Book" was the opening subject of discussion: its beauties were extolled, its meaning explained; and the different sects of reli-

* At Toledo, Seville, Calatrava, forty academicians composed the number, an example which has been accidentally imitated by those of the present day in Italy and France.

gion sometimes compared, approved, or condemned. After this exordium, subjects of science engrossed the attention of the learned members, and the conferences generally terminated by the recital of some new, or some celebrated verses of the day. Perfumes and rose water were then, (as now in the East), handed round, and a sumptuous repast closed the labours and the pleasures of the meeting.

The fair sex were even excited by the universal fashion, and the talents of the Andalouzan beauties were employed, and recompensed by the generous and polite Al-Hakim.

Aischa, daughter of the grand justiciary, was as celebrated for the charms of her mind as for those of her person ; her poetry was universally read and ad-

mired, and she exhausted labour and wealth in the collection of a large, yet select library. Myriam, the daughter of one Abou Yacoub, gave public lectures in Seville ; and some of the women of Cordova travelled over the East, in search of fresh acquisitions of literature, and everywhere astonished and delighted the world by their rare talents and elegant accomplishments. Al-Hakim, himself a proficient in many branches of knowledge, determined to bestow on his son Haschenr, the best and most solid education. The most eminent masters were appointed to superintend his youthful studies, and to inculcate on his mind the vast advantages of peace and the arts, over the rude employments of war and conquest.

“Never,” said they, “make war un-

less absolutely forced so to do ; for only in peace canst thou form or maintain thy people's happiness. What glory is there in laying waste fertile districts, sacking towns, and carrying death and desolation to the extremities of the earth ? Deceive not thyself with such false maxims of a proud and mistaken ambition. In the practice of moderation and justice, thou mayest live respected and happy, and when the hour arrives, no pang of remorse shall render death terrible to thy soul."

Such were the precepts in which the youthful Haschem was brought up, as Al-Hadi, to the vast and powerful empire of the Ommiades.

The mind of Al-Hakim was once more disturbed by the fierce rebellion of the Zanhag tribe, among the Berber states of

Africa. Al Hassan, its ambitious leader, after various successes, was at length defeated by the talents and valour of the brave Galeb al Garoub, the general of the Spanish forces, and the defeated chieftain repaired to Cordova, to sue for pardon and amnesty, where he was generously received by the King, and hospitably entertained during the period of his residence.

In the mean time, works of the greatest public utility were carried on with activity and judgment. The internal navigation was carried to greater perfection, by enlarging the canals, and the toils of agriculture were lessened and encouraged by the irrigation of the dry lands. Numerous aqueducts watered the provinces of Granada, Murcia, and parts of Arragon, and the parched up earth of

these districts, revived by the all nourishing element, produced tenfold returns. The plough cut the plains and valleys, even to the mountain's acclivity, into whose rich recesses the zeal of the miner dived deep in the successful search for minerals, precious stones, gold, and silver.

Al-Hakim was said by his subjects, to have turned the sword into the ploughshare, and in his reign, the martial tones of the drum and tecbir had ceded to the melody of the soft aber, and the joyous sound of the kitar. The monarch, and the nobles vied with the farmer, in their knowledge of tillage, of grain, and of plants. At the approach of spring, the shepherds, (the Bedouins of Spain), were seen migrating with their rich merinos, to fresh pastures, and all the

empire smiled in the fecundity of her teeming soil, in the intelligence of her people, and in the justice of her wise, and benevolent monarch.* Death cut

* Bibl. Arabic. Hispan., Mariana, Cardonne, Conde, and Bibl. Or.—The justice of Al-Hakim was displayed in the following well-known instance : To enlarge the grounds of the Azhara palace, Al-Hakim caused a sum to be offered to the proprietor of the neighbouring land ; he refused to sell it at any price ; the despotic prince seized it, and the injured man complained against his sovereign before Abn Ben Vafid, one of the magistrates of Cordova. Anxious to do justice, yet fearful of offending the King, Vafid at last ventured on the following expedient. He went with an empty sack and a mule to the gardens of the Azhara, where he found Al-Hakim superintending the erection of a new pavilion on the *unpurchased* ground. The Cadi respectfully asked if he might be permitted to take a little of the earth ; his request was granted ; after he had filled his sack, he further asked the King to help to lift it on his mule ;

short the happy, and the noble reign of

the King consented, but could hardly raise it, with all his strength. Upon which, Aben Ben Vafid spoke thus: “Commander of the Faithful! that sack, which thou canst hardly lift, is but the smallest portion of the earth in this field, how then wilt thou support all its weight when, on the great judgment day, thou hast to render account of thy possessions?” The monarch returned thanks to the Wazir of police for the lesson he had given him; his justice restored to the rightful owner the property, and his generosity added the gift of the new building as some recompense for the temporary privation.—Conde, vol. 1; Cardonue, tome. 1, who makes the complainant a woman: vide p. 349. A few pages speak of the inauguration of Al-Hakim, whom he calls Hakkam, and a few *lines* can comprise all the events of so remarkable a reign!—p. 343, 348, Edn. 12mo. The Spanish Shepherds, spoken of in the text, are called by Conde, *Moèdinos*, (Arabic) from which, he conjectures, the word *Merinos* (Spanish) was formed. The wool of Spain was most celebrated.

Al-Hakim II. [A. D. 976—7.] The virtuous son of Abdalrahman expired, in the midst of projects for the further increase of his people's glory, in the sixty-third year of his age; and the bitter tears which washed his too early sepulchre, proclaimed the nation's deep sorrow for his loss, and their fears for the coming reign.

Such is a faint, and meagre sketch of the palmy days of Spain; of an epoch, when she gave laws and language to nations; and the model to the reviving literature of the modern world.

Deeply must the historian lament, often must the student deplore, that the Arabian literature, although in the present age somewhat better known, still remains obscured, and confined within barriers which few have been able, or

willing to invade.* While the poetry, the history, and the arts of a few colonies,

* “ I once more request,” says the great hero of Eastern and Western literature, “ that in bestowing these praises on the writings of Asia, I may not be thought to derogate from the merit of the Greek and Latin poems, which have justly been admired in every age; yet, I cannot but think that our *European* poetry has subsisted too long on the perpetual repetition of the same images, and incessant allusions to the same fables: and it has been my endeavour, for several years, to inculcate this truth:—

“ *That if the principal writings of the Asiatics, which are deposited in our public libraries, were printed with the usual advantages of notes and illustrations, and if the languages of the Eastern nations were studied in our places of education, where every other branch of knowledge is taught in perfection, a new and ample field would be open for speculation. We should have a more extensive insight into the history of the human mind, we should be furnished with a new set of images and similitudes, and a number of excellent compositions*

in the Ionian sea, have formed the attentive and monotonous study of Europeans for ages, while their prejudices have been accounted truth, and their fables received as history ; the mighty nations of the Eastern world, whose antiquity recedes before the search, and to whose origin, the link of creation may be perhaps attached, remain imperfectly explored, dimly read, or barely noticed, except through the medium of religious prejudice, or the equally false colours of the historians of Greece and Rome.

would be brought to light, which future scholars might explain, and future pens might imitate."—Sir W. Jones' Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations, p. 189, 190, 1 vol., 2nd. edit., 8vo. London, 1777.

CHAPTER VII.

Haschem ascends the throne—Muhammed Ebu Amer, or Almansour—Rebellion in the African provinces—Frontier war—Retreat of the Arabs—Death of Almansour.

THE spirits of the great Abdalrahman, and of his successor, slept with the just. With them departed the splendour of the Spanish Ommiades, and the true power of the Empire. The childish Haschem was left, at eleven years of age, to the tutelage of his mother, Sobeiha, and had it not been for the genius, the valour, and the

virtues of one man, the crown had at once fallen from his infant brows, and left his name as much a blank in history, as are his qualities, or renown. To the great hero, whose deeds form the matter of the following pages, the reigning dynasty owed its prolonged existence, and the Spanish Arabs their further glory. Yet, had the astrologers of that age really imbibed any of their pretended inspiration, they would have foretold to their favourite soldier,* the ulterior consequences of his impetuous valour, and we might easily believe that, in that case,

* The most favourite study or fanciful pursuit of the Hagib, was that of Astrology. He courted and rewarded its professors and paid peculiar deference to their opinions or predictions. Conde, vol. 1; Mariana, vol. 1.

the sagacity of the statesman would have stifled the disappointment of the ambitious warrior. But fate had spun another web for Spain, which it is now the historian's duty to unravel.

During the latter years of Al-Hakim's reign, the talents, and affection of his favorite Sobeiha, had enabled her to assume considerable control over his mind and heart, and she had become an important personage in the regal administration of affairs. Among her secretaries, appeared the young and handsome Muhammed Ebn Amer, a native of a small town in the neighbourhood of Algeciras. Sent early to the capital, he made the most rapid progress in the usual routine of education at the Royal Colleges, and passed through all his studies with distinguished honour. Called hence, to be

Alchatib, to Sobeiha, he had, by his faithful assiduity in that situation, won her esteem and respect, sentiments, in which Al-Hakim participated to a great degree. The death of that monarch placed the kingdom in the hands of Sobeiha, and Muhammed rose consequently in importance ; and on the ruins of his rival's fortune, the Hageb Giaffar, (whose misfortunes and fate are the only stain on Muhammed's name), he built his own power and eminence. The kingdom was governed by his wisdom, and firmness, and by the prudent sagacity of his patroness ; while the degenerate Haschem, sunk in the arms of pleasure and vice, to insignificance and oblivion. The Spanish historians have designated this period as the *reign* of Muhammed ; and though in fact mistaken, yet, the coins,

and the khotbah, were all the signs that marked Haschem's existence either in that, or in any subsequent period.*

The policy of Abdalrahman, and of his son, had preserved for many years peaceful relations with the Christian states; and the scene of war had usually been exhibited in the plains of Almagreb, and among the fierce tribes of Zanhag and Sus. The desire of Muhammed for conquest, and for personal distinction in the field, added to the ease with which the Mussulmans were excited, and again sighed for battle against the Infidels, made him resolve on entering into a treaty of amity with the chief leader of

* The King lived always in the greatest privacy, and very few, if any, were admitted to his presence, except the Hagib Almansour, and the Princess So-beiha.

the Berber tribes, in order to unite all the forces of Andalouz in the grand campaign, which he meditated against the states of Leon and Castille. He therefore concluded a peace defensive and offensive, with Balkin Ben Zairi da Zanhag ; and then, made a progress along the Ebro to Zaragossa, to inspect the forces and ammunition, and to make all the necessary preparations for taking the field. The war commenced by an entrance into Gallicia, where he committed great devastation, and whence, he returned to Cordova loaded with spoil, and followed by a host of captives. The following year, he again invaded Gallicia with equal success, and on his return, was dignified by the public voice, as Al Mansour; the name by which he is more commonly known in history. Alman-

sour's success excited to the utmost the martial spirit of his countrymen, and the warriors resumed their arms, and eagerly enrolled themselves under the standards of one who appeared equally the favourite of heaven, and of their King. Almansour also spared no efforts to ingratiate himself with the soldiers. He distributed booty among them in larger shares than heretofore, revived the ancient custom of the Arabs, in the feasts of victory, where he visited all the groups, and calling each by his name, gave him his thanks and praise, for his conduct in the battle. Such was the general of Spain ; during war, the stern and dauntless hero ; and the familiar patron of his soldiers, when the hour of danger had passed away. The warlike and active genius of Almansour, left the Christians

no time to recover from his repeated invasions of their territory. Each spring, he ravaged Navarre; each autumn, he laid waste Catalonia. The terrified Asturians, removed from their frontiers nearer to their original fastnesses in the Gallician mountains; and there even the Arabian General prepared to follow them. The troops of the King of Leon, united to the forces of the Count of Castille, prepared to make one more vigorous effort in defence of that territory which it had cost them so much time and blood to acquire, and from which, it seemed but too probable, that so formidable, so unsparing, and so active an enemy, would effect their entire expulsion. Near the banks of the Douro in the following year, the two armies encamped, and prepared for action. In the interim, fre-

quent skirmishings took place, in which the Christians were always victorious. This success alarmed the mind of Alman-sour, and his discerning eye observed certain other signs, which led him to suspect want of zeal, or loyalty, in the main body of his troops. It was after passing them in glittering review, on the plain where they were encamped, that he retired to his tent, with his Emir Mustapha ; and then expressed his fears of the bravery, or good faith of the soldiers. “ How many,” said Almansour, “ of the faithful and true, thinkest thou we can number in our ranks ?” “ My Lord,” said Mustapha, “ thou surely knowest.” “ Nay, by Allah,” said the Hagib, “ I know not, thinkest thou there are a thousand ?”—“ No, surely not.” — “ Three hundred ?”—“ No.”—“ Then fifty ?”—

“ To tell thee my opinion then, O Hageb, in all that sparkling host, I know but *three*.” This unexpected reply confused and distressed Almansour ; and he was deeply absorbed in the subject, when suddenly the trumpet of a strange warrior was heard, and the officer on guard announced the arrival, before the camp, of a Christian knight, clad in complete mail and alone, who offered single combat to any of equal degree, among the Moslem bands. The challenge was at length accepted ; the stranger coupled strength and courage with singular skill and address ; he laid two of the bravest of the Mussulmans, who had entered the lists, dead upon the ground ; and seeing reluctance among the Arabs again to venture their strength ; he exultingly exclaimed : “ What ! not one brave knight among

your turbaned bands ; none left to measure lances with me ? Come on, then, one, or two, or three ; 'tis all the same to me ; singly, I defy you all."

On this, the army of the Christians shouted loud at the gallantry of their champion ; while that of the Arabs groaned in despair. At length, another knight of Andalouz ventured to try his strength and skill, but in vain ; the sword of his adversary mortally wounded him. " O Mustapha," said Almansour, " thou wert indeed right, when thou saidst we had but three true loyal cavaliers in all our army." " Stay," replied Mustapha, " seest thou the housing of yonder doughty warrior's horse ?" " I do," replied the hero : " Leave me to revenge our dishonoured name, and that housing shall be thine." Mustapha ad-

vanced against the foe. In the desperate struggle which then ensued, each cavalier employed his utmost strength and skill—fortune at last declared against the Castillian ; Mustapha overthrew him ; transfixed him with his sword ; and having cut off his head, brought that, and the trappings, in triumph to Alman-sour's tent. This success reanimated the courage of the Arabians ; the trumpets sounded for the general onset, and the charge of the Moslems was so tremendous and continuous as to sweep the Christians entirely from the field of battle. Nine thousand captives were added to the rich booty of the Arabian General, who returned to the capital amidst the admiration and plaudits of all classes. From the cities of Leon and Astorga, the principal citizens had retired towards

the north, taking with them their treasures, their wives and children, and the minds of the peasantry of the Douro country were in consequence filled with apprehension and dismay. In the year 983, these towns fell after a long resistance into the power of the Arabs, and as the struggle had been obstinate, the massacre was dreadful ; those who escaped death were carried away in slavery, the cities were burnt, and the fortifications reduced to a mass of ruins. After this great, and decisive expedition, Alman-sour retired to repose from the fatigues of warfare, in Cordova.

Here, the sternness of the warrior suddenly subsided : and in a civilised capital among the arts, and scenes of peace and elegant profusion, the mighty soldier assumed the character of a vigilant minis-

ter, a lover of literature, an admirer of art, and a promoter of all the useful institutions of his country. He rewarded the eminent poets, and astronomers, and raised several to the Walisates of various provinces. The great aqueduct which brought the waters of the Guadalquivir, over an extent of nearly thirty miles, were completed about this time in the town of Ecija, by the orders and superintendence of Sobeiha, and a suitable inscription commemorated the useful event.*

Almansour visited the colleges, and

* See the Arabic (and Spanish translation) in Conde, vol. 1, p. 496. It is dedicated to the mother of the Prince of the Faithful, and contains her praises. To Sobeiha and her faithful architect, Sahib Xarta, Cordova owed the erection of a splendid Mosch, called after the name of the Princess.

academies throughout the kingdom, and often distributed the prizes of merit with his own hands. Few ever paid so much attention, and with so much success, to having eloquent preachers in the Moschs, sincere and able Fakirs in the laws and doctrine of Islamism; nor were these ever in greater number, than during the *reign* of Muhammed Ebn Amer.*

The arms of the Arabs were again pointed towards the Pyrenees, and the total subjugation of Catalonia contemplated, when the attention of Almansour was diverted and absorbed, by the breaking out of a formidable rebellion in the African provinces. The defeated chief-

* Arabic MSS. of Toledo, Shonner and Conde, vol. 1, see also Swinburne's Travels, vol. 2, p. 217. The whole 98th chapter of Conde, gives all these particulars in great detail.

tain, Al-Hassan, who had on his submission, been so graciously received, and so hospitably entertained by Al-Hakim in Cordova, had long since retired from that city, to the residence of Nasour, the Soldan of Lower Egypt ; and now, that the great forces of the Andalouzan army were engaged in a war of extermination against the Christians, Al-Hassan deemed it a favourable moment, for reasserting his pretensions in Almagreb. He, therefore, raised a considerable force : and as the ally of Almansour, Balkin, pretended that he had been compelled by the orders, and power of Nasour, to grant Al-Hassan considerable aid ; the rebel's army thus shortly assumed an imposing aspect. Nevertheless, the bravery, and generalship of Abdalmelec, (who was sent to command the opposing forces by his

father Almansour), overcame the allied tribes, who were defeated in a few successive engagements ; and seizing the person of Al-Hassan, he brought him once more to Spain, where he was executed in the environs of Tarifa. Thus perished the last of the royal family of the Edrissites, celebrated as the founder of the Morocco Empire.* Although, for a short period Almagreb again was reduced to submission, the war soon recommenced by the open treachery of Ben Zairi, who, in violation of his existing treaty with Almansour, invaded the Cordovan possessions in Africa, and with his son Ben Zairi Mansour, ravaged the district. The Andalouzan General Aboulbehar, defeated his forces, and again proclaimed

* See Cardonne, vol. 1. Conde, vol. 1. D'Herbelot, Biblioth. Orient. vol. 1, p. 624.

the authority of Spain, in that disaffected province ; but seized by one of those sudden, and astonishing caprices, for which no explanation can be given, Aboulbehar, in the hour of victory, turned his arms against the Andalousian power ! In this emergency, the faithful Zanites were appealed to, and they took the field to support the cause of the Ommiades. Ben Atha, chief of that tribe, reconquered in a few months, the whole district from Zab to Ceuta and Tangiers. In the King's name, the valorous chieftain was invited over to Spain, where he was sumptuously entertained, and dignified by the title, and privileges of the Wali, or Wazir of Almagreb.

His father had, however, borne that of Emir, and whether Ben Atha aimed at independence, or that his vanity was

offended at what he considered an insulting distinction, he abruptly quitted Cordova, and retired in great, and manifest discontent to Fez, where, in the following year, he appeased his anger, or ambition, by attempting to usurp the honours, and power of an independent sovereign.* On this event occurring, for the first time, the Zanites appeared arrayed in battle against the Spanish Ommiades, and the contest was long, and painful, and the success equally divided. The stab of a murderous Berber had nearly ended the Zanite's days, and gave renewed vigour the efforts of his adversaries. The wounded Ben Atha retreated to Mequinez, where he attempted, but in vain, to make head against the son of Alman-

* Cardonne, tome 1. Conde, tome 1.

sour, whose valour, skill, and activity, finally succeeded in terminating the war, and presenting the states of Fez, and Almagreb, as peaceful tributaries to the Spanish crown. This glad news was publicly proclaimed at the Alcazar, and in all the Moschs, according to custom. On the joyful day of the Fête of Victory, it was rendered doubly splendid from acts of public beneficence, dictated by a civilised humanity. Liberal alms were given to the destitute ; unhappy prisoners confined for debt,* were liberated, and

* The general rule in Moslem lands respecting debtors is, that when the debt is clearly proved before the court, i. e. Cadi, the imprisonment will follow on execution against the debtor, unless the debt be paid. All the debtor's effects are sold by the Caidât or judgment. But the imprisonment is limited, and generally is prescribed in the condemna-

their bonds cancelled ; the great bridge of Toledo was commenced ; and fifteen hundred Christian men, and three hundred women, and slaves, were restored to the blessings of freedom.

The after efforts of Ben Atha, to disturb the peace of Africa, were of little avail, and the turbulent chieftain at length met his death in the deserts, from a disease, occasioned by his many wounds, and from which, the skill of his Hakim could not preserve him.

About this period, the nuptials of Abdalmelec and his niece, the lovely Hali-ba,* were celebrated in Cordova. All

tion of the judge. If the debtor be a trader or artisan he is made to work out his debt, according to his calling. Vide Hedaiah, c. 20, Bib. du Roi ; and the Commentary voce Gorrare.

* She was the daughter of Abdalla Ben Yahic Ben

the citizens joined in the festive ceremonies on the occasion, among which, not the least interesting, or important, were those of giving the great alms to the

Abi Amer and of Boriha, the daughter of Almanzor, hence she was the Hagib's grand-daughter, and the niece of Abdalmalec. Vide Conde, vol. 1, c. 99, where the whole ceremony of these nuptials is detailed. "We shall look in vain among the laws of nature for prohibited degrees of marriage. The doctrine of the *horror naturalis* is a fiction; it was raised by those moralists who were unable to mark the difference, between nature and custom. The history of mankind confutes the doctrine. Nations the most polished, such as Phenicians, Egyptians, Persians, Athenians, and Lacedemonians — people the most savage, the Tartars, and North American Indians for example, have been accustomed to marriages among their nearest relations." Mohammedanism, c. 5. But in all cases and in all nations, the affinities of mother, daughter, and sister, have barred the ties of marriage.

poor, the handsome endowment, and marriage of one hundred female orphans ; and the elegant contests of literature, where prizes were discerned to the best, and most tender poet. The marriage rites were solemnised in the superb gardens of the Al-Ameria, until that time, a royal appanage, but which were then presented, as a gift, to the noble Alman-sour.*

All the nobility¹ were present. The bride was proceeded in her progress through the streets, by a troop of the most lovely damsels of the city ; she was seated on a car of triumph, made of solid gold, and drawn by the purest blood

* They were situated behind the Meruan palace, and were called Al Amer-ia, from the period when they became Almansour's property. Bibl. Or. vol. 1, p. 318 and Conde, c. 99.

horses of the desert, the perfumes of Arabia Felix, and the precious stones, and metals were profusely scattered among the crowd ; and the high officers of state, the Cadis, and various bodies of the civil and religious corporations, with bands of music preceded, and a numerous suite of distinguished military officers, of Sheiks, and of the most eminent of the citizens, closed the splendid train. On the return to the palace, the bride was led to a beautiful pavilion, whose doors, a chosen band of young girls defended, armed with ivory lances tipped with gold. Against these lovely warriors, the gallant Abdalmelec was to attempt to force his entry ; by the help of a few select associates, the light and fanciful contest was brought to a speedy close ; and the epithalamium of the hap-

py pair was sung amidst the shouts, and rejoicings of the people, and the brilliant illuminations of the palaces, gardens and city of Cordova. (986—987.)

In the meantime, Almansour had not allowed the Christians to remain in peace. He had again entered the Gallician territory, sacked, and burnt many towns, and villages, and after nearly destroying Compostella by fire, had led away from its smoking ruins, four thousand slaves, and as a permanent trophy of his success, the bells of the Cathedral of St. James were taken down, brought away, and placed in the court of the great Mosch of Cordova.

In the year 1001, the army of Alman-sour again took the field. Chosen bodies of men had been transported from the

African provinces to Valencia, where they were disembarked, and joined the immense levies of horse and foot from Merida, Toledo, Murcia, and from all Andalusia. It appeared, from his mighty preparations, as if Almansour had resolved, that this should be the final struggle ; and that when his victorious army should reenter the capital, the faith, and power of the Christians should have been exterminated throughout all the Pyrenees. Nor were the preparations of his adversaries less extensive. Feeling the dreadful emergency of the case, the Kings of Leon and Navarre, for the first time, united their forces, and the Count of Castille entering shortly afterwards into this sagacious alliance, the combined army was enabled to pre-

sent a striking, and most formidable appearance.*

Dividing his great force into two divisions, of which, the one was composed of the foreign troops from Africa, while the other, composed all the Andalouzan soldiers, Almansour scoured the country along the banks of the Douro, without meeting any resistance, which could insult his pride, or call down his vengeance. Suddenly, he was startled by the bright and martial appearance of the Christian army, in the neighbourhood of Medina Cœli, near the Castle of Anozor,

* Ascargorta, *Hist. d'Espagne*, vol. 1. Conde, vol. 1, and Cardonne, vol. 1. of which latter history, I must observe that either the authorities of all the Arabic MSS. of the Escorial are unworthy, or the narrative of Cardonne is completely so, from the time of Al-Hakim's decease to the fall of the Ommiades.

and between the town of Soria, and the banks of the river. It is said, that on viewing the vast extent, which the armament of the Gallicians covered, their solid phalanx, and glittering warlike array, the hearts of the Arabs were seized with some misgivings, as to the success of the coming hour. Yet, when that hour arrived, at the sound of their inspiring tecbir, they joined in the war cry, obeyed the voices of their generals, and rushed to the battle. The contest raged fiercely from the rising to the setting sun, and all seemed aware, that if once the Christian banners lowered to the storm, the power of that faith was at an end, and the kingdom of Pelasgus for ever demolished. The Christians, therefore, made the most heroic struggles. In vain the Arabian cavalry swept

the ground in their tremendous charge ; in vain Almansour rallied and cheered his drooping, or his retiring squadrons. In vain the sound of tecbir and drum, the promise of the Prophet, the pride of long success, and the remembrance of former victories. All these, for the first time, fell ineffectual on the Moslem ear and mind. Night overshadowed the frightful scene of carnage, and the two armies remained upon the plain, amidst the dying, and the dead. At dawn of the succeeding day, Almansour reluctantly gave the order to retreat ; and the Christians, too sorely galled to offer resistance, or to attempt pursuit, saw with the returning light, their dreaded enemies receding from the field.

Overcome with grief, and exhaustion, and covered, with wounds Almansour,

carried in a covered litter, accompanied his army, to Walconari about forty miles from the fatal field, and close to the town of Medina Cæli. Here, his son Abdal-malec had already arrived, to console the wounded pride of the hero, and to reanimate him with future hopes. But the mind of Almansour was too deeply penetrated with the accursed remembrance, that the Christian faith and power had mocked his efforts, and that it still survived, and he yielded to his proud despair ; his broken heart breathed forth its last sighs in the embraces of filial affection, while the news of his death spread gloom and sorrow throughout the empire.

Clothed in his panoply of war, (the mark that he died in holy service of the Alighed,) and borne, and surrounded by

his dejected soldiers, the body of the noble and generous warrior, was consigned to the tomb;* and the inscription of his valour and exploits, was the production of a poet of that faith, and nation, which, while living, he had nearly exterminated.†

* His body was covered with the aromatic dust, which the conqueror had collected and carefully preserved, from his armour and person in the fifty fields of battle, in which he had been engaged against the Infidels. *Los Arabes*, tome 1, p. 548.

† Don Hernandez Moratino, a dramatic writer of Spain. The epitaph (the only one of all composed, which still exists) is in Spanish and the wandering stranger may still view the Arab's sepulchre at Medina, Al Zelim, and these words,

“ No existe ya, pero quedó en orbe
Tanta memoria de sus altos hechos.
Que podras, admirado, conocerle
Cual si le vieras hoy presente e vivo

The character of Ebn Amer Alman-sour appears that of a great, and generous mind, of unequalled valour, romantic gallantry, and of highly refined and useful tastes. If in the pride of courage, and imbued with the spirit of Islamism, he wasted men and money, in the pursuit of the Alighed, yet, in victory, he was merciful, and in peace, he courted the useful arts of his age; joined the society of the learned, and shared in the honours, as well as in the pleasures of literature.*

The princess, who had befriended his

Tal fue, que nunca en sucesion eterna

Daran los siglos adalid segundo.

Que asi venciendo en guerras, el imperio.

Del Pueblo del Ismael acrezca y guarde."

* Vide Conde, vol. 1, c. 98, and passim from p. 497 to 548.

youth, and so sagaciously dignified his after life, survived him but a short time. At her decease, the monarchy virtually expired. The scenes of power, taste, and splendour, which have so long beguiled, and fascinated our attention, now recede, and must fast disappear in the blank and cheerless aspect of anarchy and tedious rebellion, innumerable factions, and monotonous warfare.

CHAPTER VIII.

Haschem deposed—Civil war—Muhammed declared King—Death of Muhammed and reascent of Haschem to the throne—Supposed death of Haschem—Continuance of civil war and decline of the Arab power.

THE son of Almansour, the brave, the ardent, and the faithful Abdalmalec, was selected by the dying princess, as the Hagib of her son, and the choice was confirmed by the approval of the majority.

The Zanite chief, Alman Ben Zairi sent rich presents, in token of his esteem, and his only son Mansour, as the

pledge of his fidelity.* Anxious to revenge the memory of his father, to obliterate his last defeat, and to acquire for himself, the admiration of the people, Abdalmalec entered the Christian territory, and laying waste the province, utterly destroyed the city of Lerida. On this, the exhausted Galicians proposed for peace, and the unwillingness of the Hagib was overcome by the advice, and persuasions of the generous Abdalla, the brother in arms of Almansour. A treaty for three years was entered into, at whose expiration the war was renewed, and the destruction of Avila, and of Salamanca, attested the power, and the success of the Mussulmans.

* The youthful Mansour remained in Cordova till the after troubles of the royal family broke out ; he was sent back to his father by Suliman.

In 1008, Abdalmalec returned to Cordova, where the pains of disease interrupted his projects of military glory, and his patronage of the arts, and he soon after expired, by the decree of fate or the hand of an assassin;* having administered with zeal, and success, during six years and a half, the affairs of the kingdom. His young, and dissolute brother Abdalrahman, aspired to, and obtained from the vicious Haschem, the vacant post. The first act of the new minister was to corrupt the people, the second, to depose his benefactor and King. The unfortunate Haschem was forced to resign the sovereign power, and the kingdom became the scene of civil war. The

* “ Y de su grave dolencia falliciò en la luna de Safer del año (1008) 399 no sin sospechas de haberle atosigado.” Conde, vol. 1, p. 557.

rich and powerful members of the royal race, cursed the usurping Hagib, and took vigorous measures for his utter destruction, and the Prince Muhammed, the great grandson of the great Abdalrahman, solicited by that cherished name, and by his own claims, the suffrages and the assistance of the Arabian people. Strengthened by strong reinforcements, and by all those who hated or despised the upstart pretensions of the Hagib, Muhammed appeared before the gates of the capital, and all the people took up arms to support one or other of the two great factions which were destined to destroy and obliterate the dynasty of the Omniades in Spain. The Alites, and the Alamerites, so denominated from their respective origins, in turn swayed the sceptre, and oppressed the people. The

Andalousian soldier generally enrolled under the royal banner; the African tribes marched in the rival ranks.

The army of Muhammed advanced to Cordova, and surprised the capital, and a desperate struggle ensued, when the streets were washed with blood, and blocked up by the bodies of the slain. Victory declared for Muhammed, and the cruel death of his rival extinguished the house of Almansour, and the real pretensions of the Alamerites. But the spirit of faction was too widely sown, and the Walis too aspiring, not to renew the quarrel and prolong the war. Muhammed, declared Hageb, aspired in his ambition to the name, as well as power of the King. For this purpose he meditated the murder of Haschem, and was only dissuaded by the wily Whada, the

personal attendant of the deposed monarch. Whada proposed to gratify the wishes of Muhammed at a less expence than by the effusion of royal blood ; and to this Muhammed acceded. By the murder of some meaner personage, the traitors accomplished their design ; the death of Haschem was publicly announced, and the people were deceived and gratified by the pomp and ceremony of his supposed funeral. Muhammed was then proclaimed King, under the title of Mohdî Billah, or the Conciliator.

The forcible expulsion of the African guard was one of the first acts in the new reign, and those proud warriors, burning with revenge, instantly joined the discontented faction, and chose Hischem Ben Suleiman as their leader. In a fierce encounter between the hostile parties,

Hischem was defeated, and his gory head thrown from the ramparts among his followers, added fresh fuel to the spreading flame. Suleiman, his cousin, was chosen as his successor, and the Africans could hardly have selected a braver, or a more sagacious general.

Before hazarding decisive measures, Suleiman withdrew from Cordova, traversed with celerity almost all Spain, rallied his friends, bribed his enemies, and, advancing to the North, made a treaty with the Christian kings, and with Sancho of Castile, who readily lent him money and troops, on the condition of having certain territories ceded to them, in case of his success.* Fortified with

* The conduct of the Christian kings, at this period, if not honourable, was at least politic. Had they made general war against the Arabs for the

these, Suleiman joined the great body of the Alamerites, and advanced his standards to the mountains near Quintos, where the forces of his rival, Muhammed, shortly afterwards arrived.

The battle, which ensued, was long and bloody; the royalist forces were completely routed. After leaving twenty thousand Cordovans dead or dying on the field, Muhammed fled to Toledo, where Obeidalla, his son, was Wali; while the victorious Suleiman marched without delay to Cordova, and seized the capital, and vacant throne. In the midst of an alienated people, he was proclaimed Al

purposes of conquest, they would have extinguished that flame which, while it consumed their enemies, fed their own future prosperity; and, in the interim, the various pretenders to power, in Cordova, paid for the infidel's assistance, at the dear price of money and territory.

Mostin Billah, and then fearing the vengeance or treachery of the Cordovans, who hated his cause, and were, at that time, attached to the Ommiadan race, he withdrew to Azhara. A conspiracy headed by Mervan, a cousin of Suleiman, shortly broke out, but was as speedily suppressed; and the principal leaders paid the forfeit of their lives. The insidious Whada proposed to Suleiman to murder all the Christian auxiliaries who were then in Cordova. To this base suggestion Suleiman was too generous to lend an ear, and, in order to prevent it, he sent the foreigners away loaded with presents; but when Whada disclosed to him the secret of Haschem's existence, and suggested the propriety of publishing it to the world, the ambition of Almostin was too great to allow of such

a proceeding, and he refused to accede, on the plausible but artful grounds of expediency. In the mean time, with a recruited force of thirty thousand regulars, and nine thousand Christian auxiliaries, Muhammed again appeared near Cordova, to renew the contest. At twenty miles from the capital, on the field of Acbah Al Bucar, the rival powers met; the troops of the northern provinces, especially of Catalonia, performed prodigies of valour and strength, and after a long and equal struggle, Suleiman retreated. Not daring to venture within Cordova, he repaired at once to the Azhara, collected in haste all the money, plate, and jewels from the palace, mosque, and mint, and pillaged the rich and lovely town, and then, with hasty marches, withdrew to Algesiras, whence he intended to embark for Africa.

The capital and environs were again invested by the troops of Muhammed, and this espouser of the royal cause, this *conciliating* descendant of the Ommiades, did not hesitate to allow the total pillage of all that which, in the hurry and confusion of the moment, had escaped the avarice of the African guards.

Muhammed then hastened after the retreating Suleiman, with whose forces he came up on the plain near Ronda. While slowly approaching the port of Algeciras, Suleiman meditated on his best course ; fortune, it was true, had been adverse, yet she was fickle, and might change : the lovely scenes around him allured his lingering steps, and the sight of his foes reanimated his hopes, and confirmed his purpose.

“ Soldiers,” cried he, “ if we fly, we die shamefully ; and if we are conquered,

we can but perish ; let us then trust once more to our swords, and invoke victory, our sole resource.”

The soldiers of Muhammed gave way before the impetuous shock of the African cavalry ; their ranks were broken and dispersed, and Muhammed arrived almost alone at the gates of Cordova. The fortifications were ordered to be instantly repaired ; day and night all the citizens were compelled to the unceasing toil, and this, added to the misfortune of defeat,* produced violent murmurs against

* Success, says the Arab historian, decides the infamy or the virtues of a man : “ El malvado que vence es un heroe : el hombre justo y bueno, vencido, es un infame y digno de un patibulo.”—Conde, vol. 1, p. 573. The world in that age, as in those which preceded, and have since succeeded, judge only by one criterion, and that often the most fallacious, *the result*.

Muhammed. Whada was the Hagib, and the moment seemed propitious to this versatile and acute politician. The auxiliary troops of Castille took alarm at some sinister expressions, and retired from a city of treason and murder. Suleiman occupied the suburbs of Cordova, and the hour of Muhammed's popularity was passed. Suddenly the apparition, as it were, of the long lost Haschem, was presented to the eyes of the astounded Cordovans, who hailed his reappearance amidst the loudest cry of joy and applause, while Whada, exulting in this celebrated stroke of policy, proclaimed

Motives cannot always be discovered, and are seldom sought for, and man is content to form his opinions, and to regulate his judgment, by the blank or prize which his fellow creatures draw in the varied lottery of human life !

once more as King the son of Al-Hakim.

Muhammed concealed himself, and depending on the fidelity of the Slavonian guards, still kept up his hopes. His confidence was however misplaced, his hopes were vain; Anbar, the captain of that troop, dragged him to the throne, and to the presence of Haschem. By that monarch's order his head was cut off, and sent to his rival Suleiman, in the belief that such an example might produce terms of submission. The fierce Suleiman smiled in derision at the threat, while he opportunely turned the occurrence to his own great advantage. The head of Muhammed was carefully wrapped up, and addressed to his son Obeidalla, with these words: "Thus, does the King Haschem, in reascending his

throne, repay the services of those who assisted him there. This is the head of thy father, beware of falling into the hands of this ungrateful tyrant ; if thou desirest thy safety and vengeance, thou wilt accompany Suleiman."

An accompanying present of ten thousand pieces of gold was not forgotten, and the result was perfectly successful. The head of his father, Obeidalla buried with great pomp and respect, accepted Suleiman's present, swore eternal vengeance against Haschem, and then proceeded to join his father's rival with twenty thousand men, whom he had but just before destined to fight against him. But ere he reached the camp of his new ally, the Hagib Whada, by an activity and skill combined, overthrew his plans, corrupted the Count of Castille, who was

always ready to sell his services to the highest bidder, and seized on Toledo. The alarmed Wali retraced his steps ; near Maqueda he lost his army, one of his generals was crucified, and he himself taken prisoner and brought to Cordova, was there decapitated by order of the King. The death of this youthful commander, and the alliance with the Christians, disgusted and alarmed the Mussulmans, and the faith and conduct of Haschem and Whada were suspected and loudly condemned. The King, however, received his successful minister with the greatest affection, and, on this occasion, displayed his gratitude, while he evinced his total want of all discernment, by giving the most tremendous blow to the royal power. He granted to the friends of his favourite the fief or fee simple of Murcia, Carthagera,

Alicante, and Denia for ever, with right of hereditary succession to their children ! A fatal example which, once begun by the one party, was sure, when occasion required it, to be imitated by the other ; and accordingly, shortly afterwards, Suleiman bought large assistance by similar concessions to the Walis of Saragossa, Medina Cæli, Calatrava, and the Guadalaxarra. By these means, Suleiman raised an enormous force, and was soon in a state to seriously threaten the overthrow of all his opponents.

Under these circumstances, Whada wrote in the King's name to Aben Hamoud, the Wali of Ceuta, and to his brother Alcassim, the Wali of Algeciras, and Malaga, enemies of Suleiman, to promise them, on Haschem's part, as conditions of their assistance, the titles of Al-

Hadi, and Wali Al-Hadi, to the throne of Cordova ; but when the despatches had been sealed, the Hagib believing the danger was past, deferred sending them. The plague soon after broke out and ravaged Cordova ; the army of Suleiman blockaded the environs, and Haschem alarmed and suspicious, conceived notions of a conspiracy, of which Whada was the supposed leader : without proofs, and without any consideration, the weak and vacillating monarch appeared to forget the talents, the services, and the zealous fidelity of his minister, and, in a moment of passion, the order of his death was issued and executed.

The only proofs of his treason which could ever be discovered, were the letters to the two sons of Hamoud, and as the King had himself assented to their con-

tents, they in reality amounted to no proofs at all*.

Haïran, of Slavonian origin, and a naturally generous and charitable disposition, was the successor of the murdered Hagib ; and his bravery and talents might, at an earlier period, have saved the monarch, or delayed the empire's fall. But the wise and benevolent exertions of Haïran were checked or annulled by the conduct of the King, who kept all around him in fear and suspense, and

* Whada, whatever might be his duplicity towards others, evinced the greatest sagacity and fidelity to his rightful King and master, and had he lived, might have successfully retarded the fall of Haschem and his house. Nothing but imbecility and madness could account for this King's conduct on this, as well as many other subsequent occasions. Quos Deus vult perdere priùs dementat, appeared fully proved by Haschem's line of conduct.

alienated the remaining affections of his people, and estranged the nobles by his ill-judged edicts against all whom he suspected or dreaded.

Suleiman, at length, advanced on Cordova. The attack was tremendous ; the efforts of the new Hagib were vigorous and well directed, but he was finally compelled to succumb before the superior power of the besiegers on the one hand, and the apathy of the Cordovans on the other, who now had lost all desire, but that of pillage, and viewed the temporary triumphs of either party with a perfect indifference. After defending his King to the last, Haïran retreated, covered with wounds, to the house of a poor, and nameless host, where he was carefully concealed and kindly treated. Suleiman seized the throne, and the person of Has-

chem, who finally disappeared in a cloud of mystery, and was never more seen or heard of. Probably his conqueror was urged, both by his natural hatred, and from political motives, to put an end to Haschem's existence ; and this contemptible prince expired without leaving one regret in the minds of his subjects, or one virtue for the pen of history to record. [About 1013.]

In the meantime, Haïran repaired after his wounds had healed, to the Wali of Ceuta, Ali Ben Hamoud. He represented to him that he had only to appear in Spain, to assert King Haschem's cause, (whose death he carefully concealed), and to be completely successful. He detailed to him the vast advantages that would result from so doing, and that he, Aben Hamoud, would eventually suc-

ceed to the royal honours of Cordova ; he depicted the misfortunes of the last Ommiade with zeal and ability, and he succeeded in his purpose. The mind of Ali was touched with pity ; though his temper was fiery, his heart was generous, and with feelings of compassion and ambition combined, he swore to raise his standard, to reestablish Haschem, or, if he were dead, to revenge his memory. He instantly wrote to his brother Alcassim to aid all the enemies of the usurper, and he sent a considerable body of troops to Malaga, which was opposed, on its landing, by the Wazir of that town, a man devoted to Suleiman's interests. Nevertheless, when the troops of Aben Hamoud declared their loyal purpose, the inhabitants rather aided than opposed them ; the troops of the Wazir were forced to re-

treat, the invading army advanced, and all the Alamites took up arms and joined the standard of the African Wali.

On this news, Suleiman, leaving his aged father in Cordova, marched with a large army to Almuneçar, in the neighbourhood of which port, Aben Hamoud, Al Cassim, and Haïran had assembled their allied force.

On the heights around, Suleiman contrived to post his troops and harass the enemy ; but, at last, he was compelled, by the able manœuvres of Haïran and Aben Hamoud, to give a general battle. This event, however, did not occur until a year had passed away in useless and fatiguing skirmishes and onsets, and when harassed and alarmed at the vacillation of the war, and the defection of many of his troops, and at the daily increase of

those of his enemies, Suleiman knew that the decisive hour could no longer be delayed.

In the vicinity of Seville, the great engagement took place; the Andalousian troops, who formed the greater part of Suleiman's army, deserted during the combat, and turned the fortune of the day against him. His valour was in vain; he was utterly defeated, and being taken prisoner, was carried back to Cordova, where the fiery Aben Hamoud, after vainly demanding the place of Haschem's concealment, passed his sword through the bodies of Suleiman, and of all his family. This scene took place in 1016 and 1017; the lost Haschem was sought for during a long time, and his non existence appeared proved beyond a doubt. Aben Hamoud

then ascended the throne. A conspiracy against his usurpation was immediately formed. Crying out, once more, the long cherished name of the Ommiades, the people took up arms, more perhaps from the recollection of the past than with hopes for the future. Their efforts were, however, completely paralysed by the sudden energy of Aben Hamoud, their whole army completely routed, while he confided the pursuit to his general Gilfeya. But Haïran still stood his ground, and rallying his forces at Jaën, proclaimed, as King, Abdâlahman Al Mortadi, great grandson of Abdalrahman III., and, at that name, the Arabs once more marched to battle and victory.

Most of the provinces declared for Al Mortadi, and while Gilfeya pursued the war with vigorous perseverance, Aben

Hamoud himself advanced to the siege of Almeria, which was defended by the presence and the skill of Haïran. The city, however, was at length taken by storm, the head of Haïran was struck off by Aben Hamoud's own hand, who returned to Cordova in triumph. But the death of Haïran could not extinguish the hopes of his party, and by corrupting the body guards of Aben Hamoud, the Alamerites succeeded in their purpose.

The body of the African Emir was found dead in his bath, and Al Cassim flew, from Algeciras to Cordova, to seize his power and revenge his murder. The stern temper of their new governor alarmed and disgusted the citizens ; they cared little for Aben Hamoud, and less for Al Cassim ; and though the cruelties exercised by the latter, on the Slavonian

guards, whom he considered as his brother's murderers, might have been tolerated, yet the frequent executions of nobles and rich citizens, who had become suspicious to the foreign tyrant, quickly prepared the way for Al Cassim's downfall. At the same time Yahic, the son of Aben Hamoud, came forward to assert his rights to the succession, and arrived in Spain to maintain them at the head of a large body of black cavalry, composed of the negro tribes of Sûs, a most ferocious and unsparing sect. Alarmed at this news, and at the ease with which Yahic seized on Malaga, and foreseeing that Al Mortadi would only profit by their dissensions, Al Cassim proposed to his nephew to make common cause against the Ommiade; and that Yahic should divide with Al Cassim the kingdom; that, du-

ring the contest of the succession, Yahic should occupy and govern Cordova, while his uncle should take, as his division, Malaga, Seville, and the southern ports ; and that the war against Al Mor-tadi once finished, they should reign together over all Spain.

These terms being agreed to, Al Cassim departed with his brother's remains for Ceuta, and Yahic arrived at Cordova, where he was received with marks of affection, which surprised and gratified him. He soon discovered with what horror and aversion his uncle was regarded in that city, and profiting by this state of the public mind in his own favour, and by the absence of Al Cassim in Africa, he ventured to proclaim himself *sole* heir to the throne.

The people, as fickle as the ever veer-

ing wind, saluted him with every demonstration of joy, and most of the Sheiks and nobles took the oaths of allegiance and fidelity.

The war was carried on near Jaën, with great success, by Al Mortadi ; Gilfeya, and the Wali of Granada, could do little or nothing in the way of resistance ; and Abdalrahman was advised to march on the capital ; advice to which he appeared willing to accede. In the interim, Al Cassim, furious at his nephew's treachery, relanded in Spain, marched to Cordova, and forced Yahic, who had at the moment but few troops, to fly the city, into which he entered and renewed his persecutions and tyranny. The people were, at last roused, money and promises were scattered around by a band of powerful conspirators : the palace was closely be-

sieged for fifty days, and, in the end, Al Cassim only owed his life to the generosity of some few nobles, who covered his flight, and guarded his retreat to Xeres. The army of Gilfeya engaged that of Al Mortadi, and the fight lasted from the rising to the setting sun. Victory declared for the arms of the Ommiade, while at the same moment, and in the pursuit of the flying enemy, chance directed a winged messenger of death against the person of the prince, who fell amidst the shout of conquest, and the sighs of all his friends. [1022]. The hopes of his party appeared to perish with him; consternation and dismay paralysed their efforts and their minds. The Cordovans dreaded the return of Yahic, and the news of Al Mortadi's death turned their bright visions to

the gloom of night. In the moment of despair, the Alamerites regained their self-possession, and they elected and proclaimed Abdalrahman Ben Haschem, the brother to Muhammed el Mohdi, and like him, a descendant of the great Anasir. This new monarch was in the flower of his age, and of an irreproachable life and manners, and the generality, won over by his manly virtues, his appearance, and his lineage, once more flattered themselves with the hopes of a revival of Arabian splendour, as in the days of Abdalrahman and Al-Hakim. The shadow of hope only flitted across their path. The energy with which Abdalrahman V repressed the insubordination and military tyranny of the 'Zanite troops, and indeed of the army in general, irritated the proud and licentious soldiery ; his

cousin Muhammed, jealous of the preference which had been accorded to Abdalrahman, joined in a conspiracy, and the latter fell under the stabs of his guards in the palace, while Muhammed was proclaimed King [1023].

The most terrible scenes of plunder and licentiousness succeeded, and Muhammed seemed only anxious to enrich himself for the express purpose of retiring to the Azhara, and there, wasting all his ill-got treasures, in the ungoverned pleasures of sensuality. Meanwhile, Yahic had obtained possession of the person of his uncle, and had placed him in close confinement, in which, after some years were elapsed, he expired.* The reign of Muhammed was soon destined to close ;

* Cardonne says, he was put to death at once.—

his riches once gone, his fickle friends became his most decided enemies, and the unhappy prince remained, in trembling anxiety for his life, within the forlorn magnificence of the pillaged Azhara. At length, revolt was openly declared against him, he was timely warned to fly, and guarded by some faithful adherents, he retired into the province of Toledo, and bid an eternal farewell to the pleasures of empire. In the fortress of that province, he was received by its governor, a dependant of the Ommiades ; his reception was, in appearance, generous and hospitable, but, in reality, the Wali aimed at his life, and the death of Muhammed, after a few days, evinced the completion of his purpose [1025.]

The Wali of Seville, Aben Abad, owed his elevation to Al Cassim, and when in-

vited to Cordova, on the flight of Muhammed, to take the oaths to Yahic, he boldly replied, that he would never swear allegiance to the head of a party which only merited his contempt. The enraged Yahic immediately ordered troops to invest the province of the rebellious Wali, and proceeded, in person, to take revenge for the insult. Aben Abad advanced with a large force to oppose the *despicable* Yahic. Skilful and cautious, the warrior drew the son of Hamoud into an ambuscade, cut his army to pieces, and sent his head to Seville, sole, but convincing mark of his victory. This event spread dismay in Cordova; to prevent the renewal of absolute anarchy, the nobles of that city assembled and elected, as their sovereign, Haschem Ben

Muhammed, the brother of Al Mortadi.
[1026.]

This prince had passed a long time in the pursuit of science and the arts, enjoying, without other ambition, the gifts of nature, and the solid fruits of a life spent in the pleasing labours of the mind, and the extension of human intelligence. He saw, with regret, the arrival of the *imperial* mandate, he attempted an excuse, but the Alamerite nobles personally waited on him, resistance became no longer possible, and Haschem III was forced to accept of a crown, stained with the blood of his family, and sullied by the contact of the usurper's brows. Fearing the fickle and corrupt Cordovans, he alleged the pretext of war against the Christians, for immediately advancing on

Castille, where he ordered the army to assemble. The Christians had gained many advantages, which Haschem now obliged them to cede. In a war of three years' duration, he acquired reputation and success, and at the end of that period, he was induced to go to Cordova to appease the murmurs of his capital, and to gratify, with his presence, the people, who complained, as yet, they had not seen their King.

He was there saluted by an immense multitude; and he set seriously to work to repair, with moderate firmness, some of the many evils which usurpation and anarchy had given rise to. The efforts of the philosopher, when coupled with the influence and power of the King, might have been fairly expected to prove successful; but the Walis enjoyed and

refused to diminish one iota of their independence for the welfare of the state. The treasury was exhausted, and the finances, cut off by rebellion or robbery, were scantily remitted, often forgotten, or refused. The people were suspicious, industry and security were no more, and Haschem III remarked, with truth and regret that, in his age, man could no longer govern or be governed. The populace soon after insulted their new monarch, who withdrew in disgust to the Azhara palace. The turbulence of the capital then broke out in open rebellion, and the dethronement of Haschem was loudly demanded. The faithful Aben Gewahr arrived at the palace to communicate this unpleasing news to his master, who not only received it with placid in-

difference, but seemed rejoiced to retire from the turmoil of the regal life, to the quiet and security of his early days.

In the year 1031, Haschem III, the last of the Spanish Ommiades withdrew his family and friends from the city and palaces of Cordova, and retired to his castle of Abou Xarif, where he resumed his happy life. The remainder of his existence was employed in a quiet usefulness (1038), and the memory of his virtues was long preserved after the power of his race had for ever perished.*

* The Arabian historian Alathir, says Conde, states that soon after the deposition of Haschem, one of the Ommiades, a rash and inconsiderate youth, appeared and tried every means to persuade the council of nobles to elect him as their king, were it only for a

Thus fell the dynasty of the Ommiades, or the White Caliphs* of Spain. From the landing of Abdalrahman in the port of Almuneçar, to the departure of Haschem from Cordova, nearly three hundred years had elapsed. In that period, the Arabs of Spain had progressed and perfected in dominion, arts, sciences, commerce, and literature. The royal office had been sustained (with few exceptions), by able and virtuous princes,

day. He, however, could not succeed, and the young and ambitious Ommiade disappeared, and was never heard of more.—See Conde, vol. 1, p. 625.

* So denominated from the colour of their dress and standards, as their adversaries, the Abassides, were denominated the Black Caliphs, from the sad hue which they chose as their insignia :—“ In the visible separation of parties, the *Green* was consecrated

who, each year, had added to their own renown, and had increased the prosperity of the empire.*

to the Fatimites, the Ommiades were distinguished by the *White*, and the *Black*, as the most adverse, was naturally adopted by the Abassides."—Fall and Decline, vol. 10, p, 30.

* "The race of the Ommiades need not shrink from a comparison with any other dynasty of equal length in modern Europe. Many of them amused their leisure with poetical composition, of which numerous examples are preserved in Conde's History, (and in the historical Appendix to this narrative), and some left elaborate works of learning, which have maintained a permanent reputation with Arabian scholars. Their long reigns, the first ten of which embraced a period of two centuries and a half, their peaceful deaths, and unbroken line of succession in the same family, for so many years, show that their authority must have been founded on the affections of their subjects. ³ Indeed, they seem, with one or two

Henceforth the history of the Arabs in

exceptions, to have ruled over them with a truly patriarchal sway; and, on the event of their deaths, the people, bathed in tears, are described as accompanying their relics to the tomb, where the ceremony was concluded with a public eulogy on the virtues of the deceased by his son and successor. This pleasing and moral picture affords a strong contrast to the sanguinary scenes which so often attended the transmission of the sceptre, from one generation to another among the nations of the East.

“ The munificence of the Ommiades was most ostentatiously displayed in their public edifices, palaces, mosques, hospitals, and in the construction of commodious quays, fountains, bridges, and aqueducts which, penetrating the sides of the mountains, or sweeping on lofty arches across the valleys, rivalled in their proportions the monuments of ancient Rome. These works, which were scattered more or less over all the provinces, contributed especially to the embellishment of Cordova, the capital of the empire.

Spain assumes a different tone and colour. War, rebellion, and intrigues are its chief elements, the growing strength and pride of the Christians its principal

The delightful situation of this city, in the midst of a cultivated plain, washed by the waters of the Guadalquivir, made it very early the favourite residence of the Arabs, who loved to surround their houses, even in the cities, with groves and refreshing fountains, so delightful to the imagination of a wanderer of the desert. The public squares and private courtyards sparkled with jets-d'eau, fed by copious streams from the Sierra Morena, which, after supplying nine hundred public baths, were conducted into the interior of the edifices, where they diffused a grateful coolness over the sleeping apartments of their luxurious inhabitants."

This elegant and vivid description is taken from the work of Mr. Prescott, "Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella," vol. 1, p. 393-4-5. Ed. London, 1838.—Bentley.

events, till at last the descendants of the defeated Roderick claimed, and won back from those of his illustrious conquerors, the fertile lands, the rich mines, and the lovely domains of all the Peninsula of Spain.

END OF VOL. II.

